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ABSTRACT

The materials in this manual are designed to help workshop leaders prepare for and present a workshop for school board members on relations between school boards and administrators. Four elements basic to the establishment of effective relationships are reviewed: clarification of the roles and goals of the board and the administrators; effective communications between the board and the administrators; evaluation of administrators, particularly of the superintendent; and making positive use of divergent opinions. The manual consists of six sections: an introduction; three sections on planning, presenting, and evaluating the workshop; a selection of resource materials for the workshop leader; and a section containing four booklets for workshop participants, one on each of the four reviewed elements. The discussion of planning covers the scope and focus of the workshop, resource materials available, and the procedures, physical arrangements, and participant groupings suitable. The presentation section includes sequential descriptions of workshop activities to be used in each of the four topic areas, as well as introductory and evaluative activities. The resource materials provided include papers and position statements concerning board-administrator relationships, a paper on workshop strategy, and masters from which transparencies for projection at the workshop can be reproduced. (Author/PGD)

ED224115

Board/Administrator Relations

Keys to School Boardsmanship

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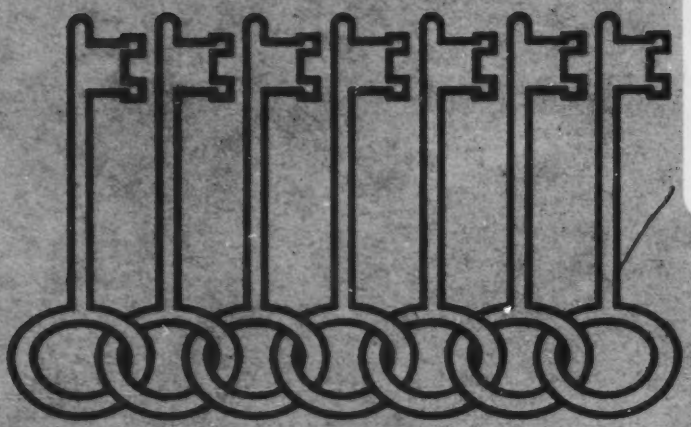

A Program of Continuing Education for School Board Members

EA 015 201

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
300 S.W. Sixth Avenue • Portland, Oregon 97204

These materials have been produced as part of "Keys to School Boardsmanship," a project to develop new materials in boardsmanship education for local school board members. It is a joint effort among:

- The Association of Alaska School Boards
- The Idaho School Boards Association
- The Montana School Boards Association
- The Oregon School Boards Association
- The Washington State School Directors' Association
- The National School Boards Association
- The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

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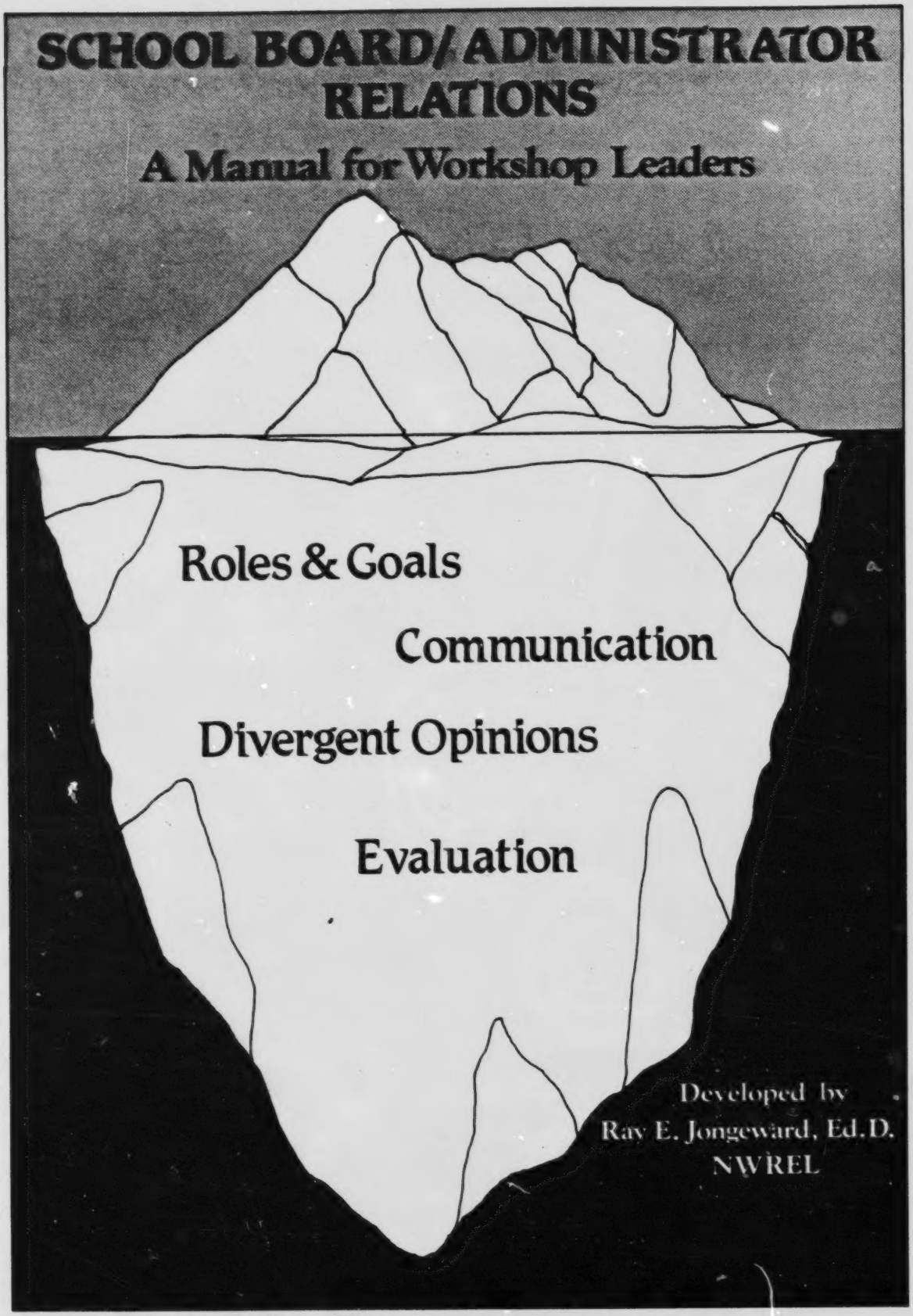
KEYS TO SCHOOL BOARDSMANSHIP

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

SCHOOL BOARD/ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONS

A Manual for Workshop Leaders



Developed by
Ray E. Jongeward, Ed.D.
NWREL

KEYS TO SCHOOL BOARDSMANSHIP

Prologue:

This manual is one in a series of thirteen developed by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) as part of the "Keys to School Boardsmanship" project.

The workshop programs resulting from the project are intended to help strengthen local school boards through continuing education.

The workshops in the series have been thoroughly tested by NWREL staff and by the staff of state school board associations in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington. These programs have been found to be extremely useful as tools for strengthening continuing education services to school board members.

The "Keys to School Boardsmanship" materials are now being published and distributed by the National School Boards Association (NSBA). In addition, the NSBA is developing a national center designed to assist state associations to make the best use of the material.

Thirteen manuals in the series now available from NSBA include:

- Board/Administrator Relations
- Building Bridges: School Board Political Roles
- Communicating with the Community
- Conflict: Alternatives to Blowing a Fuse
- Effective School Board Meetings
- The Educational Management Team
- Policy Development
- Policy is Power
- Program Evaluation: School Board Roles
- What Do School Boards Do?
- School Board Self-Assessment
- School Improvement: A Tune the School Board Can Play
- Teamwork: The Board and Superintendent in Action

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

BOARD/ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONS

The materials in this manual are designed to help workshop leaders prepare for and present the Board/Administrator Relations workshop.

Purpose and Rationale

The purpose of this workshop is to examine and review four elements that are basic to the establishment of effective board/administrator relationships. Specifically they are: Roles and Goals, Communication, Evaluation and Divergent Opinions.

Like a good marriage or freedom itself, effective board/administrator relationships are the result of an investment of time and energy in the process. Fundamental to obtaining these strong and healthy relationships is knowing your role and having realistic expectations of others; having open and honest communication so that trust and confidence abounds; establishing clear standards and criteria for judging progress; and understanding how differences of opinion may cause disruptive behavior and can be constructively dealt with. These elements form this workshop and must constantly be kept high on the attention list of board members and administrators.

Scope and Coverage

The materials in this workshop are organized into four separate and independent units. They may be used in different combinations or all together depending upon time available and purpose.

Approach to the Workshop

The approach used in this workshop is to actively involve participants with the materials and use their rich experiences to contribute to the meaning and understanding of them. A variety of activities are presented including brief lecturettes, exercises, quizzes, role plays and idea papers. The leader is expected to play a facilitator role in helping the participants interact with the materials and procedures used in the workshop.

There are six sections in this manual. In addition to this introductory section, there are the following:

Section 2: Planning the Workshop

Section 3: Presenting the Workshop

Section 4: Evaluating the Workshop

Section 5: Resources

Section 6: Participant Materials

As leader you will want to review each one to assist in your workshop planning and presentation.

SECTION 2: PLANNING THE WORKSHOP

There are several issues to consider and choices to make as you plan the Board/Administrator Relations workshop:

- Determining the scope and focus of the workshop
- Becoming familiar with materials, procedures and background resources
- Physical arrangements
- Grouping participants
- Preparation of materials and equipment
- Workshop Strategy

The information which follows is intended to assist you in considering these issues and making these decisions necessary to develop a workshop plan.

Scope and Focus

This workshop on Board/Administrator Relations is composed of four units plus opening and closing activities. The focus of these units is on clarification of board/administrator roles; effective communication; evaluation, especially of the superintendent; and divergent opinions. Each of the modules has been designed to be an independent module that can be used alone or together in various combinations. The time required for each one ranges from 35 to 50 minutes. (See the chart on page 9 for more details.) This built-in flexibility enables you to "pick and choose" from among the materials according to the time available and the needs of the audience.

Each unit attempts to achieve specific objectives. Review them to make certain these are the ones desired. You may wish to add or modify them to fit the workshop you are planning. It is important that clear objectives for the workshop are developed and can be readily explained to participants.

Materials, Procedures and Resources

Please read and become familiar with the four background papers that have been included to help you. They are:

- Board/Administrator Relationships
  A background paper by Ray E. Jongeward (Section 5)
- A Workshop Strategy Paper by Ray E. Jongeward (Section 2)
- Joint Position Statement of the NSBA/AASA on the role of and relationship between the school board and the superintendent (January 1980) (Section 5)
- A Modest Proposal to Improve Board/Superintendent Relationships by Caroll F. Johnson, Columbia University Professor, 1980 (Section 5)

These papers serve to give you important background information on the workshop topic. They contain concepts and ideas involved in the workshop, recommendations and current research. The information they contain will help you present the workshop and to respond to questions about the topic.

The format used in Section 3 was developed to make it easy for you to identify each activity, the time it requires and the materials and equipment needed to present it, as the example below will explain.

TIME MATERIALS

Activity 3: Who Has Authority for What?

Leader Focus: Clear roles and responsibilities for the Board/Superintendent are needed for effective decision making. The exercise helps clarify these roles by examining typical school district decisions and deciding who has the authority for what under what conditions.

- Procedures

- Procedures

You will note that each activity is named, and under Leader Focus the purpose of it is explained. The entire activity is bracketed within solid lines to show you when the activity starts and finishes.

In becoming familiar with this manual on Board/Administrator Relations, you will want to also review the Participant Booklet. There is a separate booklet for each of the four modules, and they contain exercises, activities and information sheets for the participants. This manual is carefully keyed to the Participant Booklet as you will see in Section 3.

Physical Arrangements

As leader you need to assure that the physical arrangements are such that they will help contribute to the success of the workshop. They have this potential if carefully planned.

The workshop materials have been developed to be highly interactive and require individual, small group and large group participation. A very successful arrangement is one in which participants are seated in groups of five to eight around round tables. This enables participants to talk freely with one another, and hear what others are saying, and allows the leader to circulate easily among the groups.

An overhead projector and screen (or wall) are needed to use transparencies for this workshop. Arrange seating to enable participants to view them without having to shift positions.

Grouping Participants

Two types of groupings of participants at workshops are typical: "stranger groups" and "home groups."

- "Stranger groups" are made up of individuals who do not know one another well, for example, school board members from different school districts.

- "Home groups" are made up of people who are quite familiar with one another, because they work together or socialize often. School board members from the same district are an example.

Each type of grouping has its advantages. Either one will work well for this workshop. There is a decided advantage in using "home" groups if the majority of members from local boards attend the workshop. This arrangement enables participants to discuss workshop materials and exercises in light of their own circumstances. Should agreement on a specific activity be made during the workshop, its implementation later on becomes much easier.

Whichever arrangement you decide upon, you need to monitor group progress regularly to ensure full participation and task related behavior.

Preparation of Materials and Equipment

It is wise in planning for the material needs of the workshop to anticipate a larger attendance than may actually attend, the point being to make certain that you have enough booklets for everyone. Of course, you will want to organize your own materials, notes, and transparencies into the sequence you plan to follow. And finally, check out the overhead projector/screen to make certain everything is in order (spare bulb--remember Murphy's Law, "What may go wrong, will go wrong!").

In summary, think of yourself as a master teacher-facilitator following good teaching-learning practices while conducting the workshop. Effective workshop leaders <u>are</u> good teachers, too!

A WORKSHOP STRATEGY PAPER

By Ray E. Jongeward

There can be no substitute for effective board/administrative staff relations in a school district. The bottom line is how well does the employer (the board) get along with the employee(s) (the superintendent/administrative staff)? All else within the school district reflects these relationships.

For the workshop leader addressing this topic, the dilemma is acute: it is simple, and it is complex. The process of establishing communication between the two groups appears to be an easy task. Yet, upon further examination, it contains an amazing number of complexities.

There are so many options available for viewing the board/administrative staff relationship. For this reason and that of validating the subject content, a group of successful board members and superintendents from several school districts were asked to address this topic. Out of their lively discussions came the four broad categories in this workshop which are used to address board-administrative staff relationships. Obviously, there are other ways to describe them or to add other categories to these four.

The approach used here is to address four basics of the board/administrative staff relationship: (1) Roles and Goals, (2) Effective Communication, (3) Evaluation, and (4) Divergent Opinions. Imbedded throughout these four factors is the development of mutual trust and confidence between and among all participants.

In addition to the approach, the leader must also decide on other issues:

1. Inclusion of the superintendent/administrative staff. The primary focus of the workshop is on board members. However, the topic also involves the superintendent and others. Care must be taken, therefore, to enable the administrator(s) to participate freely, yet not dominate the interactions. The leader will need to set the stage early in the workshop by encouraging participation by everyone yet feeling free, if need be, to limit the amount administrators participate.

2. Identification of the Audience. This design calls for board members and their superintendent (and administrative staff) to be grouped around a single table in order to address the topics and to communicate easily with one another. While this arrangement is ideal there may be times when representatives of two or more boards will form one group, perhaps with an administrator from another community. This will work but some modification in the presentation and activities may be necessary, e.g., share practices within each district and do not press for resolution of differences among the group members.

3. Focus on special needs of members. While the workshop addresses four areas within board/administrative staff relationships, any one or more may become the focus of the workshop. Discover prior to the workshop if one of these categories is of more interest and then emphasize it by spending more time on it. If there is sensitivity about these problems on the part of one or more districts, the leader may need to adopt a more subtle approach.

4. Define staff. As used in these materials, "staff" includes the superintendent, central office personnel and, if applicable, building principals. Teachers are not included in this definition.

5. Messages of the workshop. As a result of participating in this workshop, those attending should receive clear messages that:

   a. The board/superintendent/staff must establish clear, open and honest communication.

   b. The board needs to spend time getting itself together--deciding on goals for the district and for itself, how it will evaluate the superintendent, etc.

   c. Board policies are a record of the board's wishes and serve as a guide for administrators.

   d. Determining who does what and under what conditions will help keep board/administrative staff relations intact and effective.

   e. They have confidence in their ability to establish effective relationships within their own district.

Variations and combinations for using these workshop materials include the following:

- Roles and goals may be paired with a goal setting activity or with evaluation of the superintendent to form a special workshop.

- Communication and divergent opinions may be teamed to form an emphasis on the board area of communications.

- Divergent opinions may form the introduction to a conflict resolution workshop.

- Superintendent evaluation, board self-evaluation and program evaluation could be used together as the evaluation role of the board.

Prior preparation and organization of workshop materials for this workshop is essential. Selecting from among the many options demands the attention of the leader as well as assuring availability of an overhead projector and a cassette tape recorder. Preparing an agenda is very helpful for participants. This may be posted on newsprint/blackboard or on a one-page handout. The workshop purpose and objectives may be included on the printed agenda.

To use all the materials prepared requires at least six hours and demands that the leader keep the activities well paced. Careful judgment will be needed in deciding whether or not conversations between board and staff should be curtailed since a primary purpose is to open up these avenues of communication. It may be more important to allow these interactions to continue and make other allowances in the materials covered.

A brief review of the total workshop and its interchangeable parts and estimated times required is provided to help you, as a leader, determine the extent you wish to make of them. The parts include: Introduction, Roles and Goals, Effective Communication, Evaluation, Divergent Opinions, Summary and Conclusion and an additional option. The chart on the following page provides an overview of the workshop parts.

BOARD/ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONS WORKSHOP

Workshop Parts	Time Required	Materials/Equipment Needed	Content
Introduction to Board/ Administrator Relations*	20 min.	Note paper Transparencies Overhead Projector Screen	Purpose Warm-Up Exercise Four Board Functions Transparencies: School Board Arena, Boards in Public Eye, Traditional Relationships
Roles and Goals	50-60 min.	Cassette Tape Transparencies Overhead Projector Screen Participant Booklet	Tape: Who's on First Fact Sheet and Quiz Exercise: Who Has Authority For What Exercise: Board/ Administrator Responsibility
Communication	50-60 min.	Transparencies Overhead Projector Screen Participant Booklet	Fact Sheet and Quiz Lecturette: Listening Role Play: Communication in Action Idea Papers/Communication
Divergent Opinions	50-60 min.	Participant Booklet	Fact Sheet and Quiz Lecturette: Responses to Disruptive Behavior Role Play Exercise Bd/Adm. Disagreements: Causes & Solutions
Evaluation	35-40 min.	Participant Booklet	Fact Sheet and Quiz AASA/NSBA Position Statement Exercise: Evaluation Criteria for Supt.
Closing*	15 min.	Transparencies Overhead Projector Screen Reflection Sheets Evaluation Forms	Summary of Units used Reflection Sheet for useful ideas Evaluation of Workshop

*It is assumed that the workshop leader will select from among the four units (or parts of them) that are needed but will always use the introductory and closing parts.

SECTION 3: PRESENTING THE WORKSHOP

BOARD/ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONSHIPS

To the Leader: This workshop focuses upon four basic elements in school board/administrator relationships. A variety of activities are used to involve participants in thinking about and reviewing the many important facets of an effective relationship. Included are materials and activities on:

- Clarification of role expectations of board members and administrators
- Listening as an important skill and everyday patterns of communication
- Ways to respond to disruptive behavior and differences of opinion
- Evaluation responsibilities of the board, especially those for evaluating the superintendent

It is assumed that you, as leader, will study these materials carefully to decide whether to use an entire unit, parts of it and/or which units or parts to use to satisfy the needs of your audience. Additional background material is found in Section 5 of this manual.

WORKSHOP PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

TIME		MATERIALS
Total Time: 20 min.		
5 min.	Activity 1: Purpose of the Workshop	

Leader Focus: Open the workshop by explaining that the purpose is to review basic elements of school board/administrator relationships.

For this workshop--use the units you have selected--the emphasis will be on:

- Clarifying role expectations of each other
- Listening and patterns of communication
- Positive responses to divergent opinions
- Evaluation responsibilities, especially those for evaluating the superintendent

Idea and information papers, short quizzes and role plays of realistic situations are used to involve participants in these materials.

Distribute or post the agenda for the workshop.

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5 min. Activity 2: Warm-Up Activity

Leader Focus: Use one of the two activities below to help participants feel included in the group and to help focus on the workshop purpose:

- If you were granted three wishes to improve board/administrator relationships in your district, what would they be? Jot them down on a piece of paper. Share them with others at your table. — Paper

TIME		MATERIALS
	o Or ask board members to think about what their administrator does to promote good working relationships. Ask administrators to do the same for board members. Share responses with the group. As leader, summarize the points made by the members of the group.	
10 min.	Activity 3: Introduction of the Board/Administrator Topic Leader Focus: The warm-up activity helped participants focus on the general area of board/administrator relationships. This part addresses why it is important to review and study this topic. Among the points to be used are the following: o This is a complex topic with much written about it—sometimes with conflicting views. o Most of what happens between boards and administrators depends upon the trust and confidence each has in the other. o The shop-worn answer—the board makes policy and the administrator implements it—is too simple and not realistic. The materials here will help explain. o If citizen control of schools is to continue, effective board/administrator relations are fundamental to maintaining this democratic concept of American education. o Materials used in this workshop are the result of discussions and interviews with many successful board members and administrators and reviews of recent research. o Suggest that a good way to begin the workshop is to define the basic functions of a school board. Use Transparency BA 1.	Trans. BA 1a Trans. BA 1b Trans. BA 1c Trans. BA 1d

TIME	MATERIALS

- One of the best explanations of school board members' roles is given by a man called Ben Brodinsky. He defines the roles of board members four ways:

  1. Providing for a program of quality instruction

  2. Providing for overall management and direction of the school system

  3. Providing for guidance of the school system through policy development

  4. Providing for two-way communication between the professional staff and the community

  These transparencies show these basic functions and some details under each one.

- Use Transparency BA 2. As shown in this transparency, the arena in which a school board operates must take into account state and federal laws and regulations, state administrative rules and regulations, court decisions and its own local policies as they relate to their own functions as a board. This is the arena in which school boards operate. — Trans. BA 2

- Introduce Transparency BA 3. School boards are in the public eye. Many special interest groups and the general public are interested and concerned about what school boards do. School boards <u>meet</u> in public but are <u>not</u> public meetings (or forums) <u>unless</u> designated as hearings. — Trans. BA 3

- Finally, show Transparency BA 4. Illustrated here is the traditional relationship proposed for boards and superintendents. In reality, we know that it rarely, if ever, works this way. — Trans. BA 4

TIME	MATERIALS

- Noting the three factors (issues, relationships and politics), move the two overlays back and forth over the transparency to demonstrate how districts may <u>choose</u> to operate. Local decisions by boards and superintendents determine exactly how they work in any specific district. Therefore, the answer to "how it should be" depends upon how local board members and the superintendent <u>agree</u> it should be for their own district. <u>This is local control in action</u>!

- We are now ready to present the first unit in this workshop on board/administrator relations.

TIME		MATERIALS
Total Time: 50-60 min.	Unit 1: Roles and Goals	
	Background: This unit helps participants:	
	o Review role expectations of board members and administrators	
	o Examine the amount of authority boards wish to exercise and to delegate to their administrators	
	o Determine specific responsibilities of board members and administrators	
	Activity 1: Abbott & Costello - "Who's on First"	
5 min.	Leader Focus: This classic situation as played by the comedy team Abbott & Costello easily illustrates the purpose of this unit, i.e., role clarification is a highly important aspect of effective board/administrator relationships.	
	o Maintain an element of surprise and do not introduce the tape. When you have the attention of the participants, start the tape without comment.	Cassette Tape
	o After approximately 3-4 minutes stop the tape and use these points to introduce the topic:	
	-- Abbott and Costello were discussing roles but little clarity resulted.	
	-- A crucial task of board/administrators is to discuss their respective roles, agree on them and write them down (develop a policy statement). The ideal time to do this is at the time of employment.	
	-- Agreements on roles of boards and administrators vary from community to community. There is no one way. How each district decides is an expression of local control!	

TIME		MATERIALS

— Lack of clarity about the roles of board members and administrators is one of the major factors that causes friction and disagreement between them.

— This unit examines role expectations of one another, delegation of authority and specific responsibilities of board members and administrators.

10-15 min. **Activity 2: Fact Sheet and Quiz**

Leader Focus: The information found in this material was derived from board members, administrators and reviews of recent research. The quiz is intended to focus participants' attention on the roles they and others play. Agreement with proposed "answers" is less important than to open up these issues for examination and question. Local practices vary. It is essential that boards/ administrators have discussed them and agreed on where they stand on these issues if effective relationships are to exist in the school district.

o Ask participants to turn to page 1 of their booklet, complete the short quiz and browse through the information found there. — Participant Booklet Page 1

o Have participants compare their "answers" with others at their table and discuss any differences.

o Briefly share and discuss quiz "answers" with participants. "Correct answers" should not be anticipated since local policies and circumstances vary. You may expect a pattern of responses, such as the following:

1. False. State and federal laws and regulations, court decisions and increased community expectations of board members have had drastic impact on long held traditions.

2. False. While the broad purpose of schooling is the same, boards do change with time and from district to district.

3. False. Though some things may be specified, such as evaluating the superintendent annually, roles are left for local boards to decide.

4. False. They vary depending upon who has written them and what agreements exist between boards and administrators.

5. True. Board members may or may not be included; however, the superintendent and principals usually are the primary participants.

6. True. Building principals are now often considered part of management; whereas before strong teacher unions, they were usually classified with teachers. This has also caused management to define what can be negotiated.

7. True. However, the board doesn't administer the actions taken by the Management Team.

8. False. The superintendent is an employee of the board, is not elected by the people and does not vote.

9. False. While more difficult perhaps, it is still important for board members to know their employees.

10. Neither True nor False. Ideally they will work together toward common goals.

11. False. Surprise visits can foster distrust and antagonism. Effective boards spell out in their policies when and how school visits will take place.

TIME		MATERIALS

Activity 3: Who Has Authority For What?

15-20 min.

Leader Focus: Clear roles and responsibilities for board and superintendent are needed for effective decision making. The exercise helps clarify these roles by examining typical school district decisions and deciding who has the authority for what and under what conditions.

- Ask participants to turn to page 4 of their booklet. — Participant Booklet Page 4
- Read items A, B, C, D with the participants to illustrate the four levels of authority the board may exercise. Then ask participants to read each item and decide which level of authority is appropriate for each one. They are to place an "X" under the letter at the column on the right. Note: In the event an item is not applicable for their district, have them skip the item. (See forms for small and large districts.)
- When everyone has completed the items, have them compare their responses with others at their table. Ask them to explain their choices.
- Ask the whole group if certain items seemed to cause problems for many people. Ask why. Discuss and clarify.
- Conclude the exercise by asking what statements, generalizations or insights they have to offer having participated in this activity, e.g.,

  "I think our policies spell out the answers to many of these items, but we need to review them to make certain."

  "We have some differences of opinion because we have new board members; therefore, we need to discuss and agree on these issues."

  "I can see that it would have been valuable for us to have had discussions like this when our superintendent was newly hired."

TIME		MATERIALS

> Helpful Hint: Two forms have been provided which use different items--one for large schools and one for small schools. An S or L in the upper right corner designates which one is for which size of district.

15-20 min. **Activity 4: Is It a Board or Superintendent Responsibility?**

Leader Focus: The purpose of this exercise is to help board members sort out responsibilities between boards and superintendents. As a result, a distinction will more clearly exist or the resultant confusion created will be seen as needing to be resolved through board/administrator discussions.

- o Ask participants to turn to page 5 of their booklet for the exercise, "Is It a Board or Superintendent Responsibility?" Have participants read each item and decide who has that specific responsibility. Place a "B" in front of items they believe belong to the board and an "S" in front of those which the superintendent should have. — Participant Booklet Page 5
- o If they can't decide, have them place a question mark (?) in front of the item.
- o When they have finished, ask them to share their results with others at the table. Have them look first at items with question marks and try to eliminate them. Next compare the remaining items.
- o Explain that variations in responsibilities can be expected and do exist across districts; but in general, responsibilities of boards and superintendents are seen as follows:
  - — Use Transparency BA 5 to display the results. — Trans. BA 5
- o Conclude the activity with comments, questions and brief discussions as indicated.

TIME		MATERIALS
5 min.	Activity 5: Reflection Sheet Leader Focus: This activity "stops action" temporarily to allow participants to recount what they have been experiencing so far and to think about "back home" applications for any such thoughts or ideas. o Recount briefly the activities of this module. o Now ask participants to turn to page 7 of their booklet and record any thoughts, ideas or suggestions that may have been stimulated from the workshop materials and discussions.	Participant Booklet Page 7

UNIT 2: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

TIME		MATERIALS
Total Time: 50-60 min.	Background: Effective communication is a complex process consisting of many elements. In this short unit, two often neglected aspects of communication have been selected for emphasis: listening and patterns of communication. The purpose of this unit is to help participants recognize the importance that each plays in board/administrator relationships.	
	o To introduce this unit, stress points such as:	
	— Communication between board and administrators is the keystone of an effective relationship.	
	— The question is, how effective is it?	
	— Lack of satisfying communication is often cited as the major reason for members quitting the board.	
	-- This unit uses listening and patterns of communication as a focus since little opportunity is available to examine them as important aspects of board/ administrator communication.	
5-10 min.	Activity 1: Fact Sheet and Quiz	
	Leader Focus: This activity introduces several communication concepts and problems. It focuses the attention of participants on the general subject of communication and its great importance in human relationships.	
	o Ask participants to turn to page 1 of their booklet and complete the short quiz.	Participant Booklet Page 1
	o When they have finished, ask them to share their responses with others at the table to discover agreements and disagreements. Have them find out why differences exist, if they do.	

- Conclude this brief introductory activity by discussing any items that seemed to cause difficulty or differences. Since local district policies and circumstances vary, do not expect the same answers! The most frequent responses and explanations given during the testing period were as follows:

  1. True. It is the backbone of all relationships.

  2. False. Though local media are helpful in communicating, staff members, as employees, deserve to know about significant decisions and actions of the board before they read about it in the paper or hear it on radio/TV.

  3. False. Understanding one another--knowing where each person is "coming from"--provides a good basis for effective communication.

  4. False. Wise use of all available resources to collect needed information helps a board make better decisions and increases its authority.

  5. True. Personal relationships are fragile things. Sometimes the "unvarnished" truth creates hard feelings and anxiety causing people to become less able to accomplish their goals.

  6. False. Honesty is always the best policy; however, choosing the time, place and manner in which the "truth" is revealed is always a crucial judgment for keeping working relationships intact.

  7. True. To open one's self to others makes one vulnerable to possible criticism, but is very necessary if genuine relationships are to become established.

  8. True. Studies have shown that productivity increases when board and administrators demonstrate trust and confidence in each other.

TIME		MATERIALS
5-10 min.	Activity 2: Lecturette--Listening: The Often Abused and Ill-Used Communication Skill	

Leader Focus: The material for the lecturette emphasizes active listening skills and establishes a base for the role play exercises which follow.

- Ask participants to turn to page 4 of their booklet and have them read the material. Next, use Transparency BA 6 and explain the six ways of listening. Uncover one at a time using information such as:

  Participant Booklet Page 4

  Trans. BA 6

  - Silence: This involves listening without saying anything in response. We may give a nod of the head now and then. Silence is useful when others need to vent their feelings and merely want someone to hear them. Silence is hard for most of us, for it means giving our undivided attention without interrupting.

  - Acknowledgment: We give some kind of verbal "grunt" such as "oh" or "umm," or we use a non-verbal gesture such as a nod of the head. This indicates to the other that we are interested, that we care, that we are hearing. The importance of this way of listening is that it is a non-evaluative way of saying to the other, "I hear you." It is helpful to use when we don't agree with another or we aren't particularly interested.

  - Door Opener: This is a way of letting others know that we are interested and available if they would like to continue the conversation. Usually, we use some kind of verbal invitation such as, "Tell me more..." or "Would you like to talk about it?" or "Would it help to tell me about..." Sometimes we use non-verbal gestures to indicate this, such as head or arm movements. The message is the same as the other: "I care and I'm available."

- — Parroting: This is a way of listening without interrupting the train of the conversation or taking the conversation away from the one who started it. We pick up on key words or phrases which seem to have importance to the other and feed them back. Usually these are feeling words such as excited, frustrated or hurt, or they may be topical words such as wage increase, loss of pupils or tax increases.

- — Paraphrasing: This listening response allows us to feed back to the other person the content of what we heard in our own words. This gives the person the opportunity to check out if we are understanding what he/she meant to say. It is a check to see if the message sent is the message received, and if not, provides an opportunity to correct our understanding.

- — Reflective Listening: This option calls for the listener to identify the feeling as well as the content in what a person is saying. In doing so, we are saying to others that we are doing our best to see things from their point of view. We concentrate on observing their behavior as they are speaking to us and describing their behavior and the apparent feelings the message is generating in us. Our intent is to communicate not only that we understand what has been said, but also that we recognize and care about its importance to the person saying it.

o Summarize: Skillful use of these six ways of listening may be represented as active listening. This style of listening includes:

- — Hearing the person out

- — Listening to tone and feeling as well as words

- — Listening to the intent of the communication

TIME	MATERIALS

— Trying to see the world from the other person's frame of reference

— Attempting to understand the other person's point of view

o Conclude the lecturette with an explanation that the information just presented will be found to be very helpful in the next activity.

> Helpful Hint:
>
> o Listening involves:
>
> — Hearing
> — Understanding
> — Remembering
> — Doing something about it
>
> "I don't like him because he only listens when he is talking."
>
> "Remember that, "If you don't listen, someone else probably will!"

30-40 min.

Activity 3: Communication in Action: Role Play

Leader Focus: The purpose of this activity is to provide information on three types of communication and to illustrate them by involving participants in four role play situations. It builds on the previous exercise on listening by demonstrating various consequences of differing listening styles.

o Use Transparencies BA 7a and BA 7b to help explain the three patterns of communication. Uncover one at a time using the following information to help discuss them. — Trans. BA 7a, Trans. BA 7b

There are at least three patterns of communication that we may use:

A. Aggressive:

1. Disagreement— where the focus is on the differences that exist

2. Invalidation--a close cousin of #1, but the focus is on the person <u>not</u> the content

B. <u>Acquiescent</u>:

1. Avoidance--the person, content or idea is ignored

2. Overagreement--a person runs away with the other person's idea

C. <u>Active Listening</u>: Both parties use most or all of the following:

1. Hear the person out

2. Listen to tone and feeling as well as words

3. Listen to the intent of the communication

4. Try to see the world from the other person's point of view

- Next, explain that often it aids our understanding to be able to "experience" what has been discussed. The next role play situations help us do just that.

- Ask participants to turn to pages 5-6 of their booklet for this activity. — Participant Booklet Pages 5-6

- Give these instructions for the role plays:

  — Choose a partner. Decide upon one person being "A" and the other "B."

  — Read the role play silently first.

  — When the leader asks you to begin, "A" will read the printed role play part, followed by "B." Continue until you complete the role play. (Put yourself into the role. <u>Be dramatic</u>! <u>Make it real</u>!)

Helpful Hint: Demonstrate the role play using one or two volunteers (previously contacted and oriented). Illustrate one or more of the patterns of communication using the role play situations provided.

- When everyone understands what they are to do, ask "A's" if they are ready. Then, begin!
- Reverse roles. Ready? Begin!
- Do role plays 1 and 2. Then, refer to the transparency to indicate that these two role plays were intended to illustrate agressive types of communication. — Trans. BA 7a
- Ask for expressions of feelings or insights the players had as they participated as "A" or "B."
- Return to Transparency BA 7b and show the next pattern: acquiescent--avoidance and over-agreement. — Trans. BA 7b
- Ask participants to return to their pair-partner and get ready for role plays 3 and 4 using their booklet, pages 7-8. — Participant Booklet Pages 7-8
- When they appear prepared, say, "Ready? Begin."
- Reverse roles as before and repeat for role play 4.
- Again, when they have experienced both types of acquiescent examples, ask them to share their feelings and insights. Such questions as the following may assist discussions:
  - -- Are these situations realistic?
  - — How do you feel when your ideas fall on "deaf ears"?
  - — What could be done when this happens?
- Finally, explain that there has been opportunity to "experience" two patterns of communication—aggressive and acquiescent. One remains: active listening.

TIME		MATERIALS
	o Show the last type of communication using Transparency BA 7b: Active Listening. Explain that one more opportunity will be used to demonstrate it.	Trans. BA 7b
	o Review the basic elements of active listening:	
	— Hear the person out	
	— Listen to tone and feeling as well as words	
	— Listen to the intent of the communication	
	-- Try to see the world from the other person's point of view	
	o Ask participants to continue in same pairs and use this topic to practice active listening, trying to remember to use the basic elements just reviewed.	
	o Here is the topic for you to use:	
	What do you think about the workshop so far?	
	First A, then B.	
	o Ask how they did. Were they able to:	
	— Hear the person out?	
	— Listen for tone and feeling?	
	— Intent?	
	— See other person's point of view?	
	o Wait for several responses.	
	o Use Transparencies BA 7a and BA 7b to review and summarize the three types of communication.	Trans. BA 7a Trans. BA 7b
	o As a way of concluding this unit, ask:	
	— Why is communication so difficult?	
	(Wait for several responses from group.)	
	— What are barriers to communication?	
	(Ask for examples.)	

TIME		MATERIALS

Helpful Hint: The leader has other options available in using this role play exercise, e.g.,

Continue the dialog: Allow participants to continue playing the part, making up their own parts as they proceed. Then, debrief the experience.

Choose own topic: Allow pairs to select their own topic to carry out the intention of the dialog.

5-10 min.

Activity 4: Idea Papers: "Why is Communication so Difficult" and "Barriers to Effective Communication"

Leader Focus: This activity builds on the responses given at the conclusion of the role play exercises. These papers offer additional information for the participant. The leader can highlight a few of the items while helping participants browse through the material. No extended discussion is intended.

- Ask participants to turn to pages 10-11 of their booklet to see what others have said about difficulties with communication and what some of the barriers to it are: — Participant Booklet Pages 10-11
- Highlight a few items as they review the material. Do not attempt to get into lengthy discussions at this point.
- Conclude the unit by allowing time for participants to record thoughts, ideas or suggestions on their "Reflection Sheets."

UNIT 3: DIVERGENT OPINIONS

TIME		MATERIALS
Total Time: 50-60 min.	Background: The communications section of this workshop reviewed skills in listening and illustrated patterns of communication. This unit deals with one of the results of communication: divergent opinions. The materials have as their purpose to (1) see differences as healthy rather than destructive, (2) gain insights into why they exist, (3) review ways we respond to disruptive behavior, (4) learn and practice a positive response, and (5) review causes of disagreements between board and administrators.	
	o Introduce this module stressing these points:	
	— Materials in this section look at differing opinions that arise (1) between board members and (2) between board members and administrators.	
	— Activities used will emphasize that differences can be healthy; there are positive ways to respond to disruptive behavior; and causes of conflicts between board and administrators can be identified.	
	— A variety of activities are used in this section including a short quiz, a lecturette and four situation exercises.	
5-10 min.	Activity 1: Fact Sheet and Quiz	
	Leader Focus: This is a warm-up type activity that helps get participants thinking about the subject of divergent opinions and actively involved in the process.	
	o Ask participants to turn to page 1 of their booklet and complete the seven item quiz.	Participant Booklet Page 1
	o When they have completed the quiz, ask them to share their responses with others to see what agreements or disagreements exist and why.	

- Allow a short time for them to converse, and then conclude the activity by discussing any items that seemed to cause differences to exist in the groups. The most frequent responses given during the testing period are shown below. Do not expect everyone to have the same answers!

  1. True. Differences should be expected and are helpful during discussions; however, after a board makes a decision, differences need to be forgotten and everyone should support the board decision.

  2. True. Ideally, input will be requested from those directly affected including citizens, staff and students.

  3. True. Especially prior to establishing district policy is this true.

  4. True. Though special interest groups alert the board to specific issues or effects, the board must fit these interests into the overall district's operation.

  5. True. But often for the wrong reason. Unanimous votes are sometimes viewed by the public as a "rubber stamp" of the superintendent without realizing that much discussion and often disagreement were all part of the final vote.

  6. False. At times there are circumstances, history or needs that a superintendent has not accounted for that cause a board to reject a recommendation. Both board and superintendent should reassess their decision-making procedures if this becomes the rule rather than the exception.

  7. False. A compromise may be the result of sharing more knowledge as well as recognizing the concerns of others.

TIME		MATERIALS
5-10 min.	Activity 2: Ways We Respond to Disruptive Behavior	

Leader Focus: The purpose of this activity is to examine three typical ways we respond to behavior that we often find troublesome to us. The material is intended to increase the awareness of participants of their style of dealing with such situations and to realize the consequences that may result. These negative responses often affect the ways we communicate with each other.

- Ask participants to turn to pages 3-4 of their booklet and read the lecturette. — Participant Booklet Pages 3-4
- As leader, you may wish to have participants read along with you as you highlight certain parts--possibly personalizing specifics as you go.
- If it seems appropriate, ask participants to offer illustrative examples of each behavioral response.
- Conclude with such information as:
  - These are three examples of negative ways to respond to behaviors that may be disturbing to us.
  - Each one has a "price" that we pay when we use it--on ourselves and/or on those around us.
  - The purpose of reviewing this material was to help make us more aware of behaviors that may be personally destructive to us and to our board relationships.
- Conclude with any discussions that result from presenting this information. Explain that there are positive ways that we can use to minimize the costs to us and the board. The next activity will illustrate one such way.

TIME		MATERIALS
30-40 min.	**Activity 3: A Positive Response to Disruptive Behavior**	
	Leader Focus: The objective of this activity is to help participants experience one way to respond to differences of opinion. This technique enables a person to avoid taking on the stress internally by recognizing one's own feelings and expressing them in a way that allows the other person to respond. It also prevents aggressively striking out at the other person.	
	o Ask participants to turn to page 5 of their booklet and read the information together, clarifying where necessary, until everyone understands the procedure. Stress the example at the bottom of the page.	Participant Booklet Page 5 Trans. BA 8
	o Now ask participants to turn to page 6 of their booklet. Ask them to work individually, reading Situation 1 and completing the three open-ended sentences that follow.	Participant Booklet Page 6
	o Ask them to share their response with a partner (or ask for volunteers to share their responses) using the three criteria each time to evaluate their adequacy.	
	o Repeat, using the same procedure with the remaining situations (2, 3 and 4).	

Helpful Hint: Following Role Play 4 the leader may wish to note how much longer it took participants to begin writing responses to Role Play 4 compared to the other three. (It may be that we are unaccustomed to expressing positive feelings rather than negative ones.) Why would this be?

TIME		MATERIALS
	o In summary, debrief the exercise with participants using such questions as: — Can you think of situations within your board/administrator relationships where this process may be helpful? If so, give an example. — Why is it that many of us find it more difficult to compliment someone for work well done than to criticize for poor work? — What are the three criteria to remember when we want to use this process?	
10 min.	Activity 4: Board/Administrator Disagreements--Causes and Solutions Leader Focus: The purpose of this activity is to summarize into brief statements how boards and administrators often contribute to disagreements with one another. It also proposes simple solutions to prevent disagreements from occurring. o Ask participants to turn to page 10 of their booklet and read the material presented. o After they have read the information, ask such questions as: — From your experience, are these statements realistic? If not, why? — As you read the two lists of causes of disagreements, did you notice anything as you compared them? (Very similar lists!) — The solutions to preventing disagreements sound so simple. Are they? Why or why not?	Participant Booklet Page 10

TIME		MATERIALS
5 min.	Activity 5: Summary	
	Leader Focus: This activity reviews the content of the unit and asks participants to record their ratings of their board on this topic.	
	o Tell participants that the purpose of this unit was to (1) help them see differences of opinion as healthy rather than destructive, (2) gain new insights into why these differences exist, (3) review ways we respond to disruptive behavior, (4) learn and practice a positive way to respond and (5) review causes of and solutions for disagreements between boards and administrators.	
	o Ask participants to refer to their Reflection Sheet on page 13 of their booklet, and record any thoughts and ideas that may have resulted from participating in this unit on divergent opinions.	Participant Booklet Page 13

UNIT 4: EVALUATION

TIME		MATERIALS
Total Time: 35-40 min.	Background: These awareness and informational materials focus on the evaluation of the superintendent. Two more evaluation responsibilities of the board are for the school program and for itself as a board. Additional workshop materials are available for both of these school board concerns. The focus of this module is to: o Identify the board's role in evaluation of the superintendent o Examine criteria that might be used to carry out this important role o Understand the options a board has in planning for the evaluation of its superintendent	
5-10 min.	Activity 1: Introduce Topic Leader Focus: The purpose of this activity is to help participants feel more comfortable with and understand that evaluation is a positive thing and not a deep mystery. Some remarks that may be used follow: o Evaluating is something we do all the time--often we are not aware of it. o Evaluation is very informal but can be very formal (written). o Ask participants how they liked their breakfast this morning? or how well did they sleep last night? o Ask, "When you answered those questions, what was the basis upon which you judged your breakfast or night's rest? Compared to what?" o Ask participants to turn to page 1 of their booklet, and on the space provided, list at least three criteria that they think are important to use in evaluating their superintendent. Wait for them to complete their lists.	Participant Booklet Page 1

TIME		MATERIALS
	o Now, ask them to put their lists aside temporarily while they are involved in the next activity. Tell them that they will be asked to return to these lists in a few minutes to see if they wish to add to or modify their items.	
10-15 min.	Activity 2: Fact Sheet and Quiz	
	Leader Focus: The quiz and fact sheet are general awareness materials to help participants focus upon their roles as evaluators. While there are other references, the particular focus is on the task of evaluating the superintendent. The quiz is intended to speed the involvement of participants and start interactions among them. The NSBA/AASA joint statement is primarily for information and reference.	
	o Ask participants to turn to page 2 of their booklet and complete the seven-item quiz and browse the material after doing so.	Participant Booklet Page 2
	o After a few minutes, check to see if certain quiz questions caused different answers. Try to find out why.	
	o "Hard and fast" answers should not be expected since local circumstances vary. However, responses to the quiz items usually follow these patterns:	
	1. False. The board has overall evaluation responsibility. The superintendent administers the board's evaluation policies and is expected to be responsible for evaluating the staff (all other employees).	
	2. False. There is a growing trend for boards to learn how to accomplish this major task. State laws often expect them to do so.	
	3. True. Periodically evaluating opinions and expectations of the board often helps the superintendent to assist the board to realize its objectives.	

TIME		MATERIALS

4. True. Effective boards see strong relationships between setting goals and objectives for the district and the evaluation of their superintendent.

5. False. Evaluating the superintendent may satisfy a state law; however, the prime purpose is to help the school district accomplish its goals.

6. False. When evaluative criteria are well known and understood, the board and superintendent both win and everyone feels good about it.

7. True. Ideally, this is the best time to do it. It makes the board's expectation of the superintendent clear from the start.

- o Conclude this activity by asking participants to turn to page 5 and read the joint statement of NSBA and AASA on goal setting and evaluation. — Participant Booklet Page 5

- o When they have completed reading the statement, see if it raised any questions. If so, briefly discuss them and close the activity.

10-15 min. **Activity 3: Summary and Conclusion**

Leader Focus: Activity 1 was intended to get participants thinking about their role in evaluation, especially that of the superintendent. Activity 2 provided more information about superintendent evaluation. Now, Activity 3 asks participants to return to their original lists of criteria they might use in evaluating the superintendent to see if they have new or additional thoughts about them.

- o Ask participants to turn back to page 1 of their booklet where they first listed criteria for evaluating the superintendent. — Participant Booklet Page 1

- o Re-examine them in light of the information presented in the last activity (Fact Sheet and AASA/NSBA Statement). Ask them to make additions or changes as they wish.

TIME		MATERIALS

- After a few minutes ask participants to share their criteria with others at the table. Do they see similarities in their lists? Differences? Why?
- Ask for a general sharing of criteria from the various groups to see how similar or different the groups are.
- Conclude by asking such questions as:
  - Why should a board establish criteria for evaluating the superintendent?
  - What role should the superintendent play, if any, in this procedure?
  - When and how would a board develop these criteria?

5-10 min.

Activity 4: Reflection Sheet

Leader Focus: This awareness unit was intended to stimulate thoughts and ideas about evaluation—especially of the superintendent. To capitalize on this objective and to apply it to the "home" situation, there needs to be time for participants to reflect on what they were involved in during this module.

- Ask participants to turn to page 7 of their booklet and record any thoughts, ideas or insights that may have been stimulated from these materials and activities.

Participant Booklet Page 7

BOARD/ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONS: WORKSHOP SUMMARY

TIME		MATERIALS
Total Time: 15 min.	Background: Allowing sufficient time to close a workshop is important. The materials and procedures provided here are usable for summarizing the units (regardless of the number) used in the workshop.	
5 min.	Activity 1: Review the Workshop	
	Leader Focus: To begin closure for the workshop, it is important to review what was presented. This can be done by briefly summarizing the general purpose of the workshop and the specific objectives of each unit used. In addition, a brief showing of the transparencies used with the materials will assist in reminding participants what the workshop was about:	
	Four Functions of the School Board	Trans. BA 1
	School Board Arena	Trans. BA 2
	Roles of Boards and Administrators	Trans. BA 4
	Patterns of Communication	Trans. BA 7
	Active Listening	Trans. BA 6
	Responding to Disruptive Behavior	Trans. BA 8
	Boards Operate in A Fishbowl	Trans. BA 3
5 min.	Activity 2: Reflection Sheet Summary	
	Leader Focus: The Reflection Sheet used in this workshop provided participants the opportunity to record thoughts and ideas as they occurred during the course of the workshop. The purpose of the Reflection Sheet was to assist participants in finding the one or two or more ideas that might help improve their own board/administrator relationships.	
	o Distribute Reflection Sheets and ask participants to add any further ideas they may have.	Reflection Sheets
	o Next, ask them to share these ideas with others at their table. If members from the same board are present, it is especially helpful to ask them to share their ideas and suggestions for improvement while they are together as a group.	

TIME		MATERIALS
	o Conclude by suggesting that workshops are often thought to be successful if a board member can find at least one workable idea that can be put to use immediately.	
5 min.	Activity 3: Workshop Evaluation Leader Focus: Feedback to the association about the workshop is important. This form will provide the association with responses, comments and ideas they may have for improving it.	
	o Distribute Evaluation Forms and ask participants to complete them.	Evaluation Forms
	o When they have done so, ask them to leave them at the door as they exit.	
	o Thank them for their attention and attendance, and adjourn the workshop.	

SECTION 4: EVALUATING THE WORKSHOP

Evaluation of processes and materials has been a built-in feature of this workshop during its development and testing phases. As a workshop leader, you are encouraged to continue evaluating the workshop, in order to find ways to improve it or modify it for your purposes.

Testing

Several individuals and groups were involved in the initial testing. These included several board members and superintendents, professionals who reviewed materials for validity of research concepts, readability, sex bias and clarity; collegial review for content, format and training concepts; Policy Board members' critique; and over 300 board members and superintendents who participated in workshops using the materials.

The questions addressed during the workshops with board members and superintendents included their general overall reaction, helpfulness of the material, concepts presented, reactions to specific role play and other exercises, what they liked least and most about the workshop and ideas and suggestions for improvement. The focus of the evaluation was on participant reaction to the workshop materials and procedures.

Results

Reactions of participants to the pilot test workshops were positive and constructive. They generally rated the workshop between 5 and 6.5 on a 7 point scale (7=high). Comments indicated they enjoyed the experiential activities and the interaction with others the workshops provided. The varied approach helped maintain their interest and they liked the materials to take home. Criticisms frequently noted insufficient time to absorb the materials and requests for longer sessions. Some other complaints--especially by new board members—were directed toward trying to cover too much material in the time available.

The materials were equally well received by large groups and small ones. The leader, however, must vary the activities somewhat to fit the different sized groups.

Modifications and adjustments resulting from pilot testing included:

1. Reducing the original number of categories to be covered by the workshop from five to four by incorporating and consolidating materials classified under "Trust and Confidence"

2. Making questions on Fact Sheets more clearly stated to prevent several interpretations

3. Adding several transparencies to the package to assist the leader and to help communicate the concepts and messages presented in the activities and materials

4. Providing more time for discussions by participants using the materials provided

5. Incorporating an activity that enabled participants to record ideas and suggestions for use "back home"

6. Sharpening the role play materials in "Who Makes the Decision"

7. Providing examples of policies and procedures that show exemplary practices for school boards

8. Selection of items unique to small and large districts for use with the "Who Has Authority For What" exercise

Other minor adjustments were made during pilot testing that made the materials more readable, clarified instructions, improved upon the format and attractiveness, etc.

Why Evaluate?

Continuous participant feedback to you as you present the workshop can be helpful in several ways:

- Personal growth and development--Whether you are new to workshop presentations or a seasoned veteran, participant feedback can be helpful in your personal and professional development. Participant evaluation of your presentation style, of how helpful you were in their learning, and of how you handle time and materials can be invaluable to you as a source of growth.

- Adapting the workshop--Participant feedback can give you ideas and suggestions which will be helpful to you in planning future presentations of the workshop. Perhaps more time needs to be spent in one area. Perhaps objectives need to be made clearer. Perhaps participants grew too tired during a two-hour evening presentation. These participant perceptions and feelings will provide information for you to consider as you continuously adapt and modify the workshop in successive presentations.

- Improving materials and activities--Participant feedback will give you clues as to how to improve upon the basic workshop structure and materials. Perhaps you will need to add more specific legal or statutory information about your state. Perhaps you will need to provide a description of the legislative process in your state, or a list of legislators and districts.

Again, participant feedback can be an important basis for decisions like these.

What to Evaluate

An adequate evaluation of a workshop provides you, as workshop leader, the kinds of infomation you need to determine how well the presentation achieved your objectives. It also gives you an indication of how well the presentation met the needs and expectations of participants.

- Objectives—The objectives of the workshop are stated in terms of knowledge/information which participants are expected to gain, skills they are expected to develop, or attitudes they are expected to have as a result of the experience.

  Evaluation of objectives can involve questions of clarity (Are the objectives clear to participants?), questions of appropriateness or match (Do the objectives meet participants' needs and expectations?) and questions of achievement (Do participants gain in information, skills and attitudes?).

  The first two kinds of questions are relatively easy to assess during the workshop. The third, while very important, is the most difficult to assess during the workshop.

- Presenter—The skills of the presenter in conducting the workshop is another area for evaluation.

  Questions in this area might focus on the presenter's delivery of lecturettes, helpfulness in workshop activities, knowledge of the subject and other concerns.

- Workshop processes—These include the procedures and activities designed to result in learning. Among the workshop processes are lecturettes, small and large group discussions, quizzes and questionnaires.

  Evaluation of these processes involves questions regarding their contribution to participants' understanding, learning and skill development.

Evaluation of this Workshop

Two different procedures are used in this workshop to evaluate it. Unique to this workshop is the Reflection Sheet found at the end of each module. The purpose of this activity is to help participants assess what they have heard and the activities in which they have participated in order to find one or more useful ideas to use when they return home. The other is a routine procedure that asks for feedback on workshop procedures, materials and the leader.

The first one is kept by the participant for his/her use while the second is returned to the leader for tabulation and analysis.

Following is a copy of the evaluation form that is found at the back of the Participant Booklet. Each participant is asked to complete the form and turn it in to the workshop leader following the workshop presentation.

BOARD/ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONS WORKSHOP

Evaluation Form

Your reactions to this workshop will aid your association to improve future workshops on this topic. No names please. Thank you!

1. My overall reaction to this workshop:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very Low			So-So			Very High

Comments:

_____

_____

2. What was the most helpful idea you gained from this workshop?

_____

_____

3. In this workshop I'd like more of:

_____

_____

3. In this workshop I'd suggest less:

_____

_____

5. Please rate the leader of the workshop.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very Low			So-So			Very High

5. General comments, ideas or suggestions.

_____

_____

_____

SECTION 5: RESOURCES

BOARD/ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONS

There are three papers in this section that provide background help and information to you as the workshop leader. Reading them will give you helpful background information and expand your ability to answer questions related to the Board/Administrator Relations workshop. The papers are:

- Board/Administrator Relations
  A background paper by Ray E. Jongeward

- Joint Position Statement of NSBA/AASA, January 1980

- A Modest Proposal to Improve Board/Superintendent Relationships
  by Carroll F. Johnson, Columbia University Professor, 1980

BOARD/ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONSHIPS

A Background Paper by Ray E. Jongeward

Who needs another paper on board/administrator relations? Perhaps no one! There is little doubt that information on the subject is abundant. Workshops for board members on the topic are ever present. Certainly, there is very little "new" to offer.

Whether or not much has already been published, whether or not there is much "new," the fact remains that the basic building block of a school system is the relationship boards enjoy with the administrative staff (superintendent especially) of a school district. As the cover attempts to illustrate, it is the tip of the iceberg! Most of what else happens depends upon the trust and confidence board members have in their administrative staff and vice versa.

Citizen control of education is unique among the nations of the world. It is a basic tenet of our democratic society. Preserving it, like freedom itself, is a process requiring continuous work and attention. Local control of education is high priority work for the school board. Board/administrative staff relations are fundamental to this effort.

When a number of people are involved in the direction and operation of a single enterprise, role definition becomes a basic requirement. Who does what under what circumstances must be sorted out. The shop-worn answer--the board makes school policies and the administration implements them--is far too simple to be very helpful. Though truth exists in such a statement, the effective school system depends more upon verbal and written agreements (policies and procedures) the two have made about who does what. When roles have been discussed and decisions made, the stage is set upon which sound

relationships can be established. Wide differences among districts can and do exist on how roles are defined. The common factor in effective school district relationships is the clear agreements that have been made between board and administration. Recently there is a trend of some school boards toward increasing their activity and influence in areas formerly thought to be the exclusive domain of administrators. Legislative actions have promulgated this invasion of the administrators' world in mandating specific policies, e.g., annual written evaluation of the superintendent. Thus, distinctions between policy and administrative roles continue to be unclear.

Many attempts have been made to identify the role the school board should play in this relationship. There seems none so clear and logical as that proposed by Brodinsky*. The four functions he advocates for school boards are to provide for:

1. A program of quality instruction
2. Management and direction of the school system
3. Guidance of the school system through policy development
4. Two-way communication between professional staff and the community

The board, Brodinsky states, may never delegate the ultimate responsibility for these functions though it may choose to delegate the authority to professional staff to carry them out.

Goal setting for each of these functions is the logical successor to role definition. When a board is able to set both long- and short-range goals for the district and for itself, the role definition for the superintendent/staff becomes increasingly clear. Delegation of authority to implement specific goals to the superintendent/staff enables the school board to carry out one of its important roles, namely, to evaluate the performance of the superintendent.

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*Brodinsky, Ben. "How a School Board Operates," Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, Bloomington, Indiana, 1977.

Open and honest communication can be established when roles of the board/staff are agreed upon, goals establishing direction are specified and accountability well known by all participants. The prospect for trust and confidence among board/administrators is enhanced and an effective school system the likely result.

Two papers follow that provide additional points of view regarding board and administrative staff relationships. One is a copy of the recent joint AASA/NSBA statement on the role of and relationship between the school board and superintendent (January 1980). The other is by Columbia University emeritus professor Carroll F. Johnson, entitled "A Modest Proposal to Improve Board/Superintendent Relationships."

This workshop package on board/administrator relationships is part of a series of workshops and information packages on school boardsmanship available through state school boards associations. Other related topic areas and packages available include:

- Building Bridges: School Board Political Roles
- Communicating with the Community
- Conflict: Alternatives to Blowing a Fuse
- Effective School Board Meetings
- The Educational Management Team
- Policy Development
- Policy is Power
- Program Evaluation: School Board Roles
- What Do School Boards Do?
- School Board Self-Assessment
- School Improvement: A Tune the School Board Can Play
- Teamwork: The Board and Superintendent in Action

A MODEST PROPOSAL TO IMPROVE BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIPS*

The solution to troubled relationships between boards and their superintendents is simple: Require that all board members be active superintendents from other districts. That is the trend in the nation's corporations, where chief executive officers, active in other corporations, are appearing more frequently on governing boards. It certainly would make things easier for the superintendent. The board members would speak a common language, know what is expected of them, and be too busy managing their own districts to want to administer any others.

Boards and superintendents have troubled relationships because they are from different tribes. Board members are amateurs in education, superintendents are paid; board members are part-time, superintendents are full-time; board members are usually elected, superintendents are usually appointed; board members hold their power collectively, superintendents hold theirs individually. Most important, while the board is, in a sense, the boss and the superintendent the employee, the superintendent is hired to be a leader. Both the board and superintendent are in charge.

No wonder so many boards and superintendents cannot work together. Once their differences are outlined in this fashion, it becomes a wonder they can sit down in the same room together. Their areas of responsibility are not clearly defined, and they must learn to speak each other's language before the situation can be clarified. The problem is often "solved" by ignoring it. Boards and superintendents mouth suitable vague and unarguable truisms about the value of public education, and win the war by declaring peace. Both then express surprised outrage when undiscussed differences develop into conflicts. By that time, communication has become doubly difficult.

How much simpler if all board members were superintendents and all superintendents board members! Think of it, a cadre of professionals controlling the education of the nation's children, all speaking the specialized language of educational administration, accountable to no one and to nothing but the cadre's self-generated values. Think of the delightful homogeneity that would result! Since this absurd, tongue-in-cheek proposal flies in the face of our basic belief in citizen control of public education, for now we must deal with reality. In reality, the fundamental differences between board and superintendent will cause communication failures if a substantial amount of work is not invested in the relationship itself.

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*Johnson, Carroll F. A modest proposal to improve board-superintendent relationships. Updating School Board Policies, Volume 11, No. 2, February 1980.

When the relationship between a school board and its superintendent has soured, there may be a variety of substantive and understandable causes. The board and superintendent may disagree fundamentally on a philosophy of education. The superintendent or the board may be incompetent and/or corrupt. In such cases, good relations are not appropriate. The board should fire an incompetent superintendent, and a superintendent should resign or take other appropriate steps if he finds himself serving a corrupt board.

Usually, though, relationships fail because of problems that were not originally substantive. Boards and superintendents often work poorly together because of failures in communication. Good communication alone will not ensure good schools, and communication is not the only element in good board-superintendent relationships, but it is a crucial element. Good communications, mutual respect, and a clear understanding of each other's role and responsibilities: These overlapping elements form the basis for a sound relationship.

Good communication is based on shared understanding. Board and superintendent should work to develop common goals, a common language, and common expectations. Without mutual respect and clearly defined roles, that understanding cannot be achieved. If the board and superintendent have not paid proper attention to their relationship they may well end by suspecting each other of duplicity, incompetence, and downright meanness. Problems in communication are cumulative. Neglect of appropriate communication threatens first the understanding of each other's proper roles, and ultimately mutual respect.

Educating children is the ultimate goal shared by board members and the superintendent. It is the trust invested by the community in the board, and delegated by the board to the superintendent. But the board and superintendent must not only fulfill that trust, they must convey to the community how it is being fulfilled. It is the board's task to keep itself informed and the superintendent's task to keep them informed. Together they share the task of communicating the understanding they have reached to the community.

Good communication, then, between the board and superintendent is necessary to fulfill the community's trust. The board and superintendent can hardly communicate with the community if they cannot communicate with each other. Communication is simply part of their jobs. Any failure is mutual. The board-superintendent relationship is symbiotic. If they are not loyal to each other, their division will diminish the status of both and work to the detriment of education. Neither is independent. The superintendent must jealously support the credibility and reputation of the board, just as the board must maintain public and private confidence in the superintendent.

Let me put the case baldly: If you are a board member dissatisfied with your superintendent, and you cannot honestly say that he is incompetent, corrupt, or in fundamental philosophical opposition, I would urge you to evaluate your own role in the relationship first. I would urge the same to a superintendent dissatisfied with a board member. It is your job to do so.

You should cultivate in yourself a predisposition to respect your superintendent, and a willingness to understand and observe limitations on your own power. Reconcile yourself to spending much time and effort on the relationship itself, because the relationship between board and superintendent is of primary importance to any success they may have working together to educate the community's children.

Having drawn these broad generalizations on the foundations of a board-superintendent relationship, I would now like to make some specific suggestions to improve such relationships.

First of all, establish thorough selection procedures. Relations between the board and superintendent begin at the first superintendent selection interview. In that first contact, the chemical or gut feeling is important. Just as important is to become fully informed about the candidate's professional goals, standards of professional conduct, what he stands for, and so on. If the candidate is selected carefully for interview, evaluated in more than one meeting (of four to six hours each), and treated with the utmost respect and consideration throughout, a groundwork is laid for future understanding.

Second, establish evaluation procedures: Board-superintendent and superintendent-board. The board and superintendent jointly should establish clearly understood goals for the district, based on an analysis of present strengths and weaknesses. The expectations on progress toward these goals should be clearly outlined in written form and evaluation procedures established at least a year before the process of evaluation takes place. Judgments should be supported by as much objective evidence as possible.

Third, make sure your superintendent knows what you think and why. He cannot accommodate your opinions if you keep them to yourself, then vote against him on an issue without explanation. Avoid making prior commitments on issues to one faction or another. Leave yourself the option of changing your mind after discussion with other board members and your superintendent. Avoid hidden agendas, keep your mind open, and discuss your thoughts fully and candidly.

Fourth, base your action on issues, not personalities. Problems arise when the superintendent or board personalizes criticism or questions the motives behind disagreement. The person who opposes you on one issue may be with you on the next—unless you have called him incompetent or corrupt or have questioned his motives because of the disagreement. It is in the interest of board and superintendent to heal wounds, reconcile differences, and make friends of potential enemies. Don't collect enemies, either in the school system or in the community.

Fifth, and finally, maintain credibility. The board must have faith in the superintendent and vice versa. This means that not only must they be scrupulously honest with one another and in public, but every possible step must be taken to avoid the possibility of misunderstandings. Repetition is less of an evil than obscurity. Be sure that you are understood. This kind of public honesty means you must be honest with yourself as well. Avoid self-deception by examining your own motives and prejudices carefully. The trust given you by the community requires that you rise above yourself to true leadership. That requires self-knowledge.

Good relations between superintendent and board start out with each being scrupulously honest with themselves and each other. Eternal vigilance, painstaking effort, and the time necessary to proper cultivation are the price of good board-superintendent relations. When the burden of reaching amicable understanding with your superintendent seems too great, contemplate my utopian vision of a cadre of professionals. John Philpot Curran in 1790 said, "The condition upon which God hath given liberty to man is eternal vigilance." And, I might add, hard work.

JOINT POSITION STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION AND THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS ON GOAL SETTING AND SELF-EVALUATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

(Recommended by the Joint AASA/NSBA Committee - January 30, 1980)

How well does this board do its job? Do we function as effectively as we can? How can we use our individual resources to make progress in our performance? And how are we going to assess progress? These questions belong on every school board's agenda under "continuous business." They belong there because an integral part of a governing board's obligation to make policy includes identifying goals, monitoring progress toward them, and revising goals as necessary after each assessment.

To meet this obligation, every school board should adopt a written policy that states the board's belief that goal setting and evaluation are essential to exemplary school leadership. The policy also should spell out what kind of goal setting and evaluation activities the board believes will improve its own stewardship.

Here is an example of such a policy statement:

EVALUATION OF SCHOOL BOARD OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

The board believes that periodic, formal and informal evaluations of its operational procedures will improve the board's performance, exemplify the kind of constructive evaluations the board encourages for all school personnel and programs, and promote a spirit of teamwork throughout the district. Formal evaluations also provide the board with suggestions useful to the board in establishing objectives it will strive to accomplish.

At least once annually, board members will evaluate their own performance--and that of the board as a whole.

All of this information will be used by the board each year when it establishes objectives it will strive to accomplish during the coming year. How well the board accomplishes its objectives will be a measure of its performance in any year.

The basic features of a board evaluation/goal setting program are:

1. Any evaluation should be constructive. That is, it should be a tool that assumes a group of individuals is capable of improvement if evaluation is carried out systematically with good planning, conscientious follow-through, and careful assessment of results.

2. Board members should develop the standards against which they will evaluate themselves. They should be involved in development of standards that measure, for instance, their relationship with the superintendent, how well they conduct board meetings, how the community perceives the schools, and so on.

3. A board should recognize the difference between school district goals and goals that the board sets for its own performance. Some significant areas for developing school board goals are encompassed within three of the main functions of school board members, which are to serve as:

   - o governors of the school district as part of local representative government;
   - o ambassadors of the instructional program to explain the nature of the learning program to the people of the district; and,
   - o advocates for the learners of the school district with the public generally and in the halls of other local governmental agencies and the state and federal governments.

4. A form for the evaluation/goal-setting program should be designed and it should contain places to indicate not only strengths and weaknesses, but also to write in suggestions about how to improve. These suggestions can be used to set objectives for board improvement over the coming year.

5. The board should not limit itself to those items that appear on the evaluation form. While formal evaluation forms help discussions get started, informal comments also have their value; each judgment, nevertheless, should be documented with as much supportive evidence as possible.

6. Formal evaluation should take place at least once a year and at a scheduled time and place. A specific time should be scheduled well in advance of the formal evaluation.

7. A composite picture of board strengths and weaknesses is most accurate. Therefore, each board member should complete an evaluation form independently of other board members. Then the board as a whole should meet to compare and discuss results.

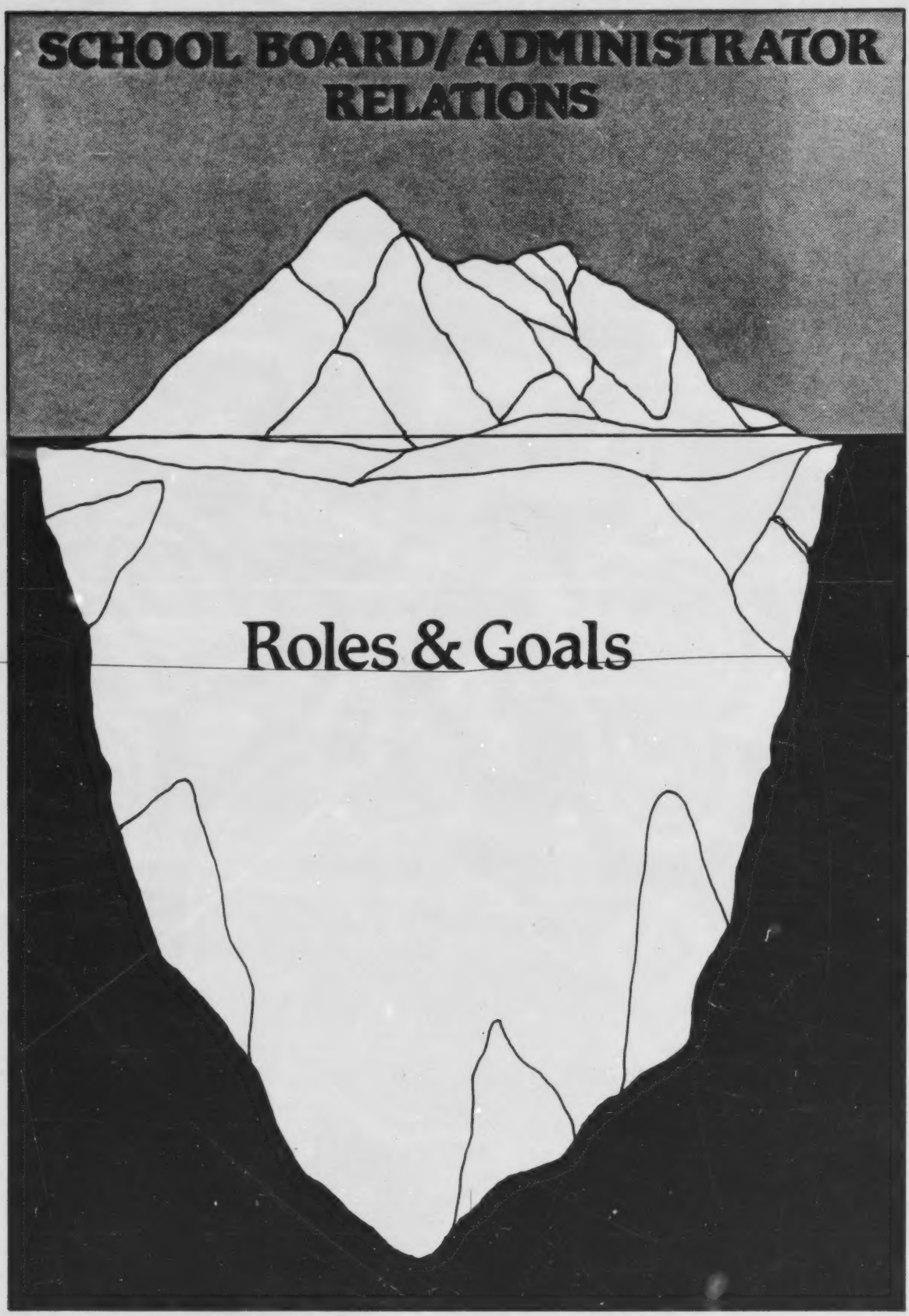
8. When results have been discussed and tabulated, the board should list the objectives it will attempt to accomplish before its next evaluation session.

9. The board should devise a process for establishing goals.

10. The board should be evaluated as whole, not as individuals.

11. The board should provide itself with appropriate inservice education to ensure it meets its own objectives.

12. The board should adhere to mandates of open meeting "sunshine laws" to ensure that self-evaluation of a board conducted in executive session does not violate any law or policy.


SCHOOL BOARD/ ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONS
Roles & Goals

These materials have been produced as part of "Keys to School Boardsmanship," a project to develop new materials in boardsmanship education for local school board members. It is a joint effort among:

- The Association of Alaska School Boards
- The Idaho School Boards Association
- The Montana School Boards Association
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KEYS TO SCHOOL BOARDSMANSHIP

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

Board-Staff Relationships ROLES & GOALS

A True-False Quiz

T/F

____ 1. The roles in school affairs are the same today as they were 15 years ago.
____ 2. The goals of the school board are fixed, and time and circumstances don't change them.
____ 3. In most states the board and superintendent's roles are spelled out by law.
____ 4. The distinctions between policies and procedures are always clear-cut.
____ 5. The term "management team," in regard to school districts, means different things to different people.
____ 6. The teacher militancy movement has helped to strengthen the management team.
____ 7. The board, by definition, is part of the management team.
____ 8. The superintendent is a voting member of the board.
____ 9. The advent of bargaining has made it impractical for board members to have direct contact with teachers and other employees.
____ 10. The school board's goals should always take precedence over employees' goals.
____ 11. "Surprise" visits by board members at schools are generally recommended as advisable because they help keep teachers on their toes.

GOALS

WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF A BOARD MEMBER?

The charge of this public office is to meet the educational needs of children, as mandated by law and as desired by the people. Personal recognition and special interests are never more important than carrying out the basic responsibility for which the board member was elected.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEES?

It is helpful for board members to remind themselves, even in times of conflict, that most people want first to do a good job . . . to make a positive contribution to the educational needs of children.

Recognition of staff members' career goals may help to minimize conflict over other matters, such as salary (which studies show is not necessarily the employee's primary concern) .

ROLES

WHAT ARE THE ROLES INVOLVED IN SCHOOL AFFAIRS TODAY?

The traditional roles in school management have been the school board, elected by the public, and the superintendent, hired by the board as the primary and responsible staff member. As a result of the bargaining movement, the "management team " has emerged. This development has been by no means uniform in all school districts, however. Indeed, the reluctance of boards and staff members to adapt to a management team mode is viewed by authorities as a major reason for continuing problems.

WHAT ARE THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES AND LIMITS OF EACH OF THESE ROLES?	The board, by legal definition, is a policy making group. Policy decisions are those that provide direction to the school system, superintendent and staff. Policies are designed to solve problems which need solving and which will not go away if ignored. They tell what is desired, and also why the board is not to be involved in day-to-day administration of the schools. The superintendent (staff) has the primary responsibility for administration of the schools, following the policies established by the board. Administrative decisions are those necessary to carry out policy. The superintendent is responsible for flexibility in these. The wise superintendent develops administrative rules, regulations or procedures to describe how he or she will administer policies. These rules and procedures should be written and be available for review by the board. The superintendent is not to establish policy for the schools. The term "management team" has become generally accepted in education to refer to a coalition of board, administrative and supervisory personnel. As employee organizations have become more assertive in recent years, it has become essential to delineate and define management responsibilities. The management team's responsibility is to make management decisions. It is *not* the task of the management team to establish policy, nor to supervise daily administration of the schools, although the management team members do have these tasks in their separate roles as board and staff.
AREN'T BOARD MEMBERS ELECTED TO MANAGE THE SCHOOL DISTRICT?	By definition, board members are part of management, since the board makes management decisions relative to budget, personnel, programs and construction. However, the board's role is largely a legislative one, and their primary task is to establish policy. The superintendent, with other staff, is concerned with the operation of the schools—administering policies and carrying out other decisions of the board. Neither "policy making" nor "administration" is synonymous with "management" as these terms apply to school districts.
ISN'T IT APPARENT WHICH EMPLOYEES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS PART OF THE MANAGEMENT TEAM?	In the past the distinction has not been clear, nor has it been important to make a sharp distinction. With the advent of the teacher militancy movement and the resulting adversary relationship, boards and superintendents have recognized the need to identify administrative and supervisory personnel and give to them a greater share of responsibility. There are now state laws and regulations as well as district policies which define "adminstrative."
DO BOARDS AND SUPERINTENDENTS SOMETIMES INVOLVE THEMSELVES IN THE OTHER'S ROLE?	Unfortunately, this sometimes does happen. A superintendent may assume a decision making role, or board members may become involved in the day-to-day functions of the district. Management teams assist in preventing this confusion of roles.
CAN THE SUPERINTENDENT AND MANAGEMENT TEAM MAKE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE BOARD FOR POLICY DECISIONS?	Yes; but a recommendation is only a recommendation. There is no implied obligation to act only as the superintendent or management team advises. For best results, the board is provided information in advance of the meeting—usually through the superintendent. This includes recommendations and/or different options that may be available. The board member has the task of keeping his or her management team and board roles separate.
DOESN'T REJECTION OF RECOMMENDATIONS IMPLY TROUBLE?	No. The board member's role is to make the decision they feel is best for the district, after they have everyone's information.

CAN THE SUPERINTENDENT INSTRUCT BOARD MEMBERS IN ADVANCE, TO AVOID CONFLICT AT A BOARD MEETING?

It is not the superintendent's role to "instruct" board members how to act, but rather to provide information that will help board members reach an objective decision. Information can help minimize misunderstanding, but it is no guarantee that there will not be debate on these issues—nor should it be, since the board is elected in order to provide additional and primary direction to the schools.

HOW CAN THE BOARD PROVIDE FOR APPROPRIATE STAFF INVOLVEMENT?

Working through the superintendent, the board can encourage staff input on matters to be considered. In many districts such input is restricted to a relatively few staff members. This sometimes results in frustration and ill feeling on the part of other staff who want greater involvement—and may limit the information on which the board's decision is made. The establishment of a management team is currently seen as a healthy and useful step to ensure involvement.

WHAT ARE WAYS IN WHICH THE BOARD CAN HELP TO STRENGTHEN A MANAGEMENT TEAM?

- Share information with and encourage involvement of administrative personnel on a continuing basis—not just when a crisis arises.
- Have clear-cut policies and procedures in writing, recognizing the roles of administrative and supervisory employees.
- Have meetings with board and administrative staff members (other than official board meetings) .
- Make it clear that administrative staff members are part of the decision making process.
- Avoid a "caste" system which implies that the board recognizes only a few high-ranking adminstrators as management.

IS VISITING SCHOOLS PART OF A BOARD MEMBER'S ROLE?

Yes. In fact, a case can be made that such visits are part of the board member's duties. "Surprise" visits may not be advisable if there is the possibility that the faculty or principal may feel the board member is only looking for faults. Drop-in calls may be welcome if they are customary and understood. Usually it is common courtesy to make arrangements with the principal. Board members can divide the responsibility of visiting different schools to ensure balance and fairness. Staff members usually welcome a board member's interest in what they are doing.

DO BOARD MEMBERS OFFER CRITICISMS OR CORRECT PRACTICES THEY OBSERVE?

Questions, criticisms or suggestions are properly made to the superintendent. There is an important difference between showing interest, or even inspecting, and assuming administrative responsibilities.

IS THE BOARD COMMENDATION OF STAFF MEMBERS APPROPRIATE?

Yes. This can be accomplished in different ways: formal board resolutions, informal but official acknowledgement, letters, newsletter items, news announcement at staff gatherings, comments and PTSA meetings, awards, certificates or compliments offered directly to the employee. Such commendations almost invariably are welcomed and appreciated.

SUMMARY

Relationships between school board members and the staff are more important today than ever before. As the result of significant developments during the 1970s, the traditional approaches of the past no longer are appropriate. Staff members' roles have changed. In many school districts, staff members have greater involvement in the decision making process than was the case even a few years ago. This in turn has had a tremendous impact on the role of the school board, which must adapt to these changes. New situations demand new ways to dealing with the schools' concerns. New management tools are needed to help produce answers to new questions.

Who Has the Authority for What?

Clear roles and responsibilities for the Board and Superintendent (staff) are needed for effective decision making. This exercise helps clarify these roles by examining typical school district decisions and deciding who has the authority for what and under what conditions.

INSTRUCTIONS:

After reading each item below, decide who has the authority to make the decision. Four different levels of authority are shown and you are to decide which one is most appropriate to the situation. The four levels are:

A. The Superintendent has complete authority to decide or act within the limits of the law.

B. The Superintendent has complete authority to decide or act but will inform the Board about the decision made or action taken.

C. The Superintendent has the authority to implement or act within the policies set by the Board.

D. The Superintendent acts only after discussion with and direction from the Board.

When you have decided which of the four levels is the appropriate one for the item, place an "X" under the letter in the space provided.

	A	B	C	D
1. Close school because of bad weather.				
2. Hire an additional teacher.				
3. Select a bus driver to replace one who just quit.				
4. Exceed the budget allocation in a specific line item of budget.				
5. Release a student to attend another district upon written request with valid reasons.				
6. Order a set of textbooks which have not been used in the district before.				
7. Increase the price for a hot lunch.				
8. Allow a service club to use the gym for a money raising activity.				
9. Restrict all students from leaving school grounds during school hours.				
10. Conduct necessary emergency repairs to boiler (cost: $2,500).				
11. Discharge a custodian for misconduct on the job.				
12. Authorize a teacher to attend a school district related meeting in another city at district expense.				
13. Sell a non-operating washing machine.				
14. Authorize parents to take a carload of students on a primary field trip.				
15. Resurface the school roof during summer vacation.				
16. Schedule a non-league basketball game with a school out of the area.				

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	A	B	C	D
1. Close school because of bad weather.				
2. Hire an additional teacher.				
3. Release a student to attend another district upon written request with valid reason.				
4. Order a set of textbooks which have not been used in the District before.				
5. Increase the price for a hot lunch.				
6. Allow a sports promoter to use the gym for a money raising activity.				
7. Restrict all students from leaving school grounds during school hours.				
8. Discharge a custodian for misconduct on the job.				
9. Authorize a teacher to attend a school district related meeting in another city at district expense.				
10. Sell old desks, typewriters and other miscellaneous small items.				
11. Authorize parents to take a carload of students on a primary field trip.				
12. Permit the high school band to play at half-time during a professional football game.				
13. Add a new course in science at the high school.				
14. Permit an underage *transfer* "K" student to enroll in school.				
15. Invest excess district general funds in short term treasury notes.				
16. Approve the sale of magazine subscriptions as an ASB money raising activity.				
17. Change the major responsibilities of a District office administrator.				
18. Select an architect.				

EXERCISE: IS IT A SCHOOL BOARD OR SUPERINTENDENT RESPONSIBILITY?

Instructions:

- Below is a long list of responsibilities that belong to the school board and/or the superintendent. Read each one and decide who has that specific responsibility. Place a B in front of items that you believe belong to the school board and an S for those which the superintendent should have.
- If you cannot decide place a ? (question mark) in front of the item.
- Share the results with other board members. Look first at items with question marks, discuss and agree on them. Next, you may wish to compare the other items with the members of your board.

1.___ Select the superintendent and delegate to him/her all necessary administrative powers

2.___ Formulate and adopt policies for the government of the school system

3.___ Recommend candidates for election as administrators, principals and teachers

4.___ Be the chief executive officer of the district

5.___ Provide direction for the educational system

6.___ Prepare and submit courses of study

7.___ Elect administrators, principals and teachers upon recommendation of the superintendent

8.___ Carry out all policies of the board through appropriate administrative procedures and regulations

9.___ Give leadership in the continuing development, operation, supervision and evaluation of the educational program

10.___ Prescribe a course of study

11.___ Approve the annual budget

12.___ Manage collective bargaining agreements

13.___ Recommend textbooks and materials

14.___ Approve collective bargaining agreements

15.___ Adopt textbooks and teacher materials

16.___ Require and consider periodic reports on the educational program

17.___ Prepare and submit the annual budget

18.___ Direct all purchases for the district

19.___ Prepare and present reports on the educational program as required

20.___ Approve the capital outlay

21.___ Approve bills previously authorized

22.___ Direct all capital expenditures

23.___ Require and approve effective plans for maintenance and operation of school properties

24.___ Maintain a continuous inventory

25.___ Plan necessary changes of school plant and facilities

26.___ Approve architect's plans

27.___ Require annual report on district programs

28.___ Administer programs of maintenance and operation of school properties

29.___ Prepare and present studies of continuing facilities needs

30.___ Provide for and submit necessary plans

31.___ Represent schools and their needs to the community, the state legislature and federal government

32.___ Provide annual report on district programs

33.___ Require adequate reports on school property and equipment

34.___ Plan and prepare measures to keep the community and legislature informed

35.___ Inform board of appeals and carry out rulings

36.___ Act as final appeal for school personnel, citizens and students

REFLECTION SHEET

Thoughts, ideas and/or suggestions our board might consider are:

1.

2.

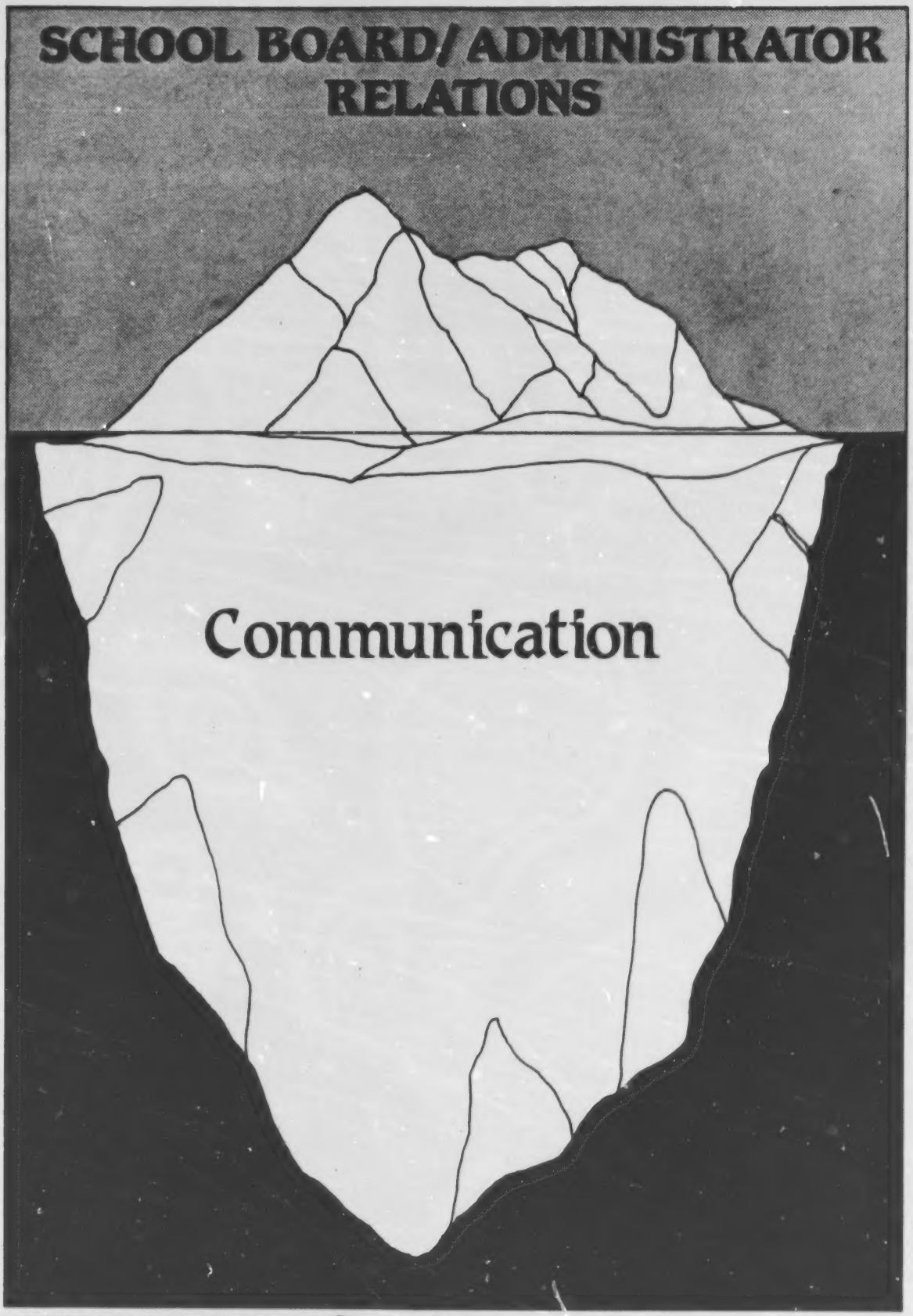
3.

4.

5.

6.

7.



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- The National School Boards Association
- The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

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KEYS TO SCHOOL BOARDSMANSHIP

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

Board-Staff Relationships

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

A True-False Quiz

T/F

____ 1. Effective communication between board and staff is number one priority for both parties.
____ 2. A good way to communicate to all staff is to publish the actions of the board in the local paper.
____ 3. Taking time to get well acquainted with each other as school board members wastes the time of the board and staff.
____ 4. Inviting staff input and communications with the board weakens the authority of the board.
____ 5. Openness is a positive interpersonal communication trait but improperly used can also destroy board-staff relationships.
____ 6. "Telling it like it is" is always a good rule to follow for staff and board members.
____ 7. To trust a member of your board or staff is taking a risk.
____ 8. Performance of staff is highly related to the amount of trust and openness the board has in itself and its own operation.

WHAT IS THE MAIN CAUSE FOR UNSATISFACTORY BOARD-STAFF RELATIONS?

There are many factors, and the problems in a given district may or may not have been avoidable. The single most common factor, however, in troubled relations is ineffective *communication.*

WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENTS IN BOARD-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS?

- Most important is to establish an atmosphere of mutual trust, openness and respect.
- In successful districts, provision is made for systematic, continuing *two-way* communication.
- In successful districts the board and staff of the school district form and represent a partnership of persons who share the common goals of serving the K-12 educational needs of the community.
- Board and staff are thought of and seen as *working together* because they are *jointly responsible* to the community.
- Open and trusted communications takes place between the board, the staff and the community.

HOW CAN A BOARD AND STAFF DEVELOP THE OPEN AND TRUSTING RELATIONSHIP THAT IS ESSENTIAL TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS?

The board and staff can have a candid and complete discussion at the outset, so that each will understand the other's roles and expectations. There can be agreement on the processes and procedures to be followed, including the conduct of meetings and methods of communications between board, superintendent and other staff.

DOES THE EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIP PREVENT DIRECT CONTACTS BETWEEN BOARD AND STAFF?

No. In fact, such contacts can have an important positive effect. It is essential that these contacts follow established policies and procedures, and that they not interfere with normal operations.

WHAT SORT OF BOARD-STAFF COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS ARISE?

Problems between board and staff may exist that prevent good partnership and communication from operating. For example:

- Confusion may exist between board and staff members as to roles and responsibilities. Staff may be getting in one another's way. There may be feelings that the board and staff are taking over tasks that do not belong to them, especially in areas of policy determination and administration. These feelings may not be openly stated.
- Board and staff are not fully informed as to what is going on and as a result are out of touch with current policies. programs and procedures.
- Board members may not be doing a good job of interpreting the school to the community. They aren't using their normal community contacts to tell their story to the community and building public understanding.
- Staff members may feel that what happens at board meetings is kept too secret. Communicating to staff before they read about it in the local paper is a preventive practice to this breakdown.
- Often board and staff feel they do not really know one another very well. Without such knowledge. there is little prospect of a genuine partnership developing between board and staff.

WHAT EVIDENCE SHOWS THAT TRUST AND OPENNESS EXIST IN BOARD-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS?

- Confidences are respected.
- There is ability and willingness displayed to listen and to question.
- There are no "hidden agendas."
- A commonly shared information base exists.
- An atmosphere of openness exists where one feels free to share ideas and feelings.
- There are no "surprises" in meetings.
- Patience is shown during decision making pressures.
- There is a generally relaxed, friendly atmosphere.

WHAT ARE SOME BENEFITS OF MUTUAL TRUST AND OPENNESS?

Even if trust and openness were not comfortable or familiar postures for board members, superintendents and staff, it would serve them well to adopt such attitudes to the greatest degree they can comfortably do so.

- Observation of performance of tasks when two or more persons or groups are involved shows that task performance increases with trust and openness.

In addition, trust and openness:

- Provide a cushion of human relationship at times when a stress situation threatens disintegration
- Diminish the likelihood of surprises – "shooting from the hip"
- Provide for small talk and even humor as an ingredient of achieving compromise

ON WHAT IS TRUST AND OPENNESS BASED?

- People's willingness to be trusting and open is based on assumptions about people, what they are like and what their nature is.
- One general set is to assume people are basically lazy, prefer to be directed by others, do not want to assume responsibility, are not ambitious, lack creativity, and are only motivated by money, fringe benefits, the threat of punishment, etc. This assumption leads to little trust or openness.
- An opposite view is to assume people are basically self-directed, creative, motivated to become (self-actualized), and that they desire to make contributions and decisions that will enhance the goals of the school district. This assumption leads to large amounts of trust and openness.
- Most of us tend to be somewhere in the middle, and we move toward the trusting end of the spectrum as communication improves.

Relationships between board and staff are greatly affected by the assumptions we hold. It is valuable to each of us to know what our personal assumptions are, so that we can modify our opinion if the experience doesn't match the assumption.

WHAT ARE SOME ADDITIONAL FACTORS IN EFFECTIVE INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION?

Establishing effective communication between board and staff members is basically dependent upon the quality of person-to-person relationships that are developed. Five factors in addition to openness and trust that board members and staff can attend to in order to improve communication with each other are:

Self-concept. How we see ourselves and our situations. *We* are the star in every act of communication. We are the screen through which we see, hear, evaluate and understand everything else. Noticing our own assumptions is the first step to clear communication.

Listening. How we listen – a skill that receives too little attention. We need information that can only be acquired by listening. Hearing is done with the ears but listening is both an intellectual and an emotional process. Being willing to listen and reminding oneself to continue to listen improves communication.

Clarity of expression. How we say what we mean or express how we feel. "If it's clear to me it must be clear to you, also." This assumption is one of the most difficult barriers to successful communication. Asking others whether or not a statement is clear to them is helpful.

Coping with our feelings, especially anger. How we cope with our emotions – especially angry feelings and how to express them in a constructive way. We can learn to express our feelings in such a manner that they influence, affirm, reshape and change ourselves and others. Admitting to ourselves that we have strong feelings is the first task.

Self-disclosure. How we disclose ourselves to others truthfully and freely. The more I know about you and the more you know about me, the more effective and efficient our communication will be. Some people have said that we will understand only as much of ourselves as we have been willing to communicate to other people. Using one's self as an example in discussions is a task-oriented type of self-disclosure.

SUMMARY

Board and staff ability and skill in interpersonal communication can establish close working relationships. A partnership can be built that is based on good will and the kindness of human beings who live together, work together and bring happiness to others, and still get the job done in a useful, timely way.

LISTENING: THE OFTEN ABUSED AND ILL-USED COMMUNICATION SKILL

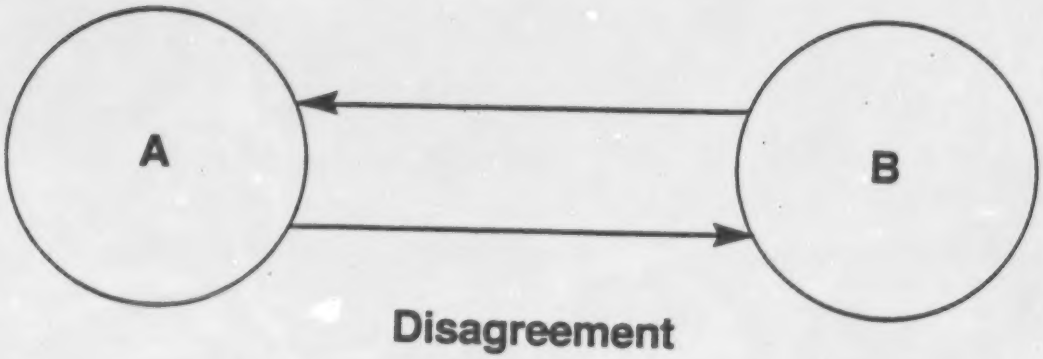
There are many ways to listen to another person. Each of us has our own way that we use most of the time. Other options exist that might increase our interpersonal skill level. Listening to another person to really understand ("understand" doesn't mean "agree") is an art that requires attention, concentration and concern. Often, we get so caught up in what we want to say in response to what the other person has said that we fail to hear "all" that is said.

How to listen is something most of us have taken for granted since childhood. To be an effective listener, we must help reduce defensiveness and try to establish an atmosphere of equality, freedom, understanding, acceptance and warmth. We need to try to avoid such things as scolding, encouraging or insulting, and refrain from judgments or evaluations. It is helpful to listen for total meaning, including feelings. Note all cues such as hesitations and inflection as well as nonverbal action like posture, facial expression and hand or eye movements. Test for understanding by reflecting in your own words what the other person seems to mean by his/her words and actions.

Becoming an active listener is not an easy skill to acquire. It demands practice and often an examination of our own basic attitudes. To show sincere interest in other people, to understand their world and their meanings is to risk being changed ourselves. It takes inner security and courage to risk understanding others. When what is being said to us is negative, it is difficult not to become defensive or retaliate. Strangely enough, we often find receiving positive comments more difficult to deal with than negative ones. Learning to accept them satisfies a basic human need and can work for us. During a time of high emotion it is perhaps most difficult to listen. We are more likely to respond to our own needs and not to the needs of others. There are danger signs that can warn us that <u>our</u> emotions may be interfering with our listening. These include: defensiveness--stressing a point or trying to convince others; resentfulness of opposition--when opposing views are expressed, you feel challenged; personality clash--suppressing genuine feelings that could be helpful if expressed.

Finally, learning to listen to ourselves is essential to active listening. When we are most aroused, excited or demanding, we are least able to understand our own feelings and attitudes. It is during such times that it is important to be sure of one's own position, values and needs and to begin listening to ourselves.

Illustration (Transparency BA 7, Disagreement)



Disagreement

ROLE PLAY 1

Disagreement

Board Member A: ...that concludes my committee report on whether or not we should join the County Bus Cooperative. I recommend that we join.

Board Member B: My brother is on the school board in Montana. They tried it, and it didn't work at all.

A: This isn't Montana.

B: I know, but our drivers say they don't want to change.

A: Our committee believes we can save dollars.

B: I think we won't have the same service.

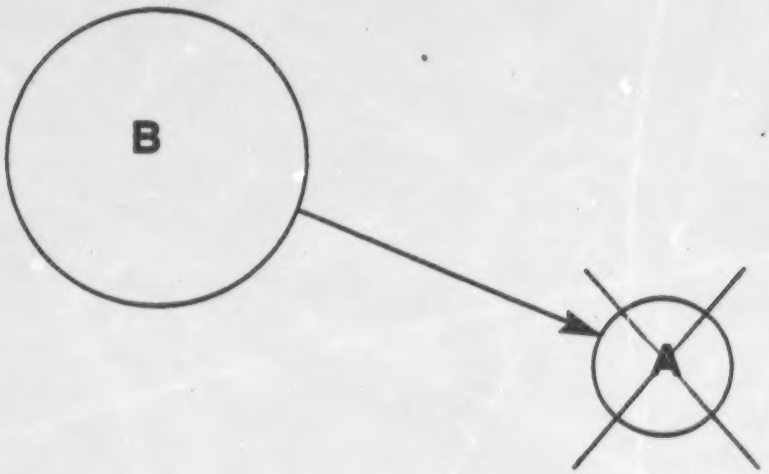
A: We need new buses and that will cost a pretty penny.

B: We have good mechanics, and I think they can keep our buses running.

Summary

Disagreement—the focus is on where there are differences. Representative comments include that it won't work, how the idea or plan is inadequate or unacceptable. There is no recognition or acknowledgment of commonality.

Illustration (Transparency BA 7, Invalidation)



ROLE PLAY 2

Invalidation

Board Member A: ...that concludes my committee report on whether or not we should join the County Bus Cooperative. I think we should join it and recommend we do.

Board Member B: There you go again, John, always wanting to change something. Don't you get tired of trying to make us do something different? You must like to make us squirm!

A: My report is based on good evidence that our district will save money.

B: John, I'll bet you just want to get rid of the bus supervisor because you never did like him. You probably have a good friend in mind to run it, too.

A: I'd like us to examine how it will help the district.

B: No, John, you just want to show how much power you have--you don't care whether it helps the district or not!

Summary

While this is a close cousin of disagreement, the target is different. Whereas disagreement is usually focused on the content of the idea or plan, invalidation is focused directly on the person. The person is "put down." His or her motives are brought into question. The attack is personal, rather than on the content.

Illustration (Transparency B\ 7, Avoidance)

Avoidance

ROLE PLAY 3

Avoidance

Board Member A: I've been thinking about the need we have of improving our PE program. I'd like to see us build a swimming pool so we could offer swimming and diving as a regular part of the physical education program.

Board Member B: At the last meeting, we were talking about how we put the budget before the community. I've got an idea...

A: A good swimming pool could be used by the community, too.

B: To get more people acquainted with our budget we could get the newspaper to put out a special supplement...

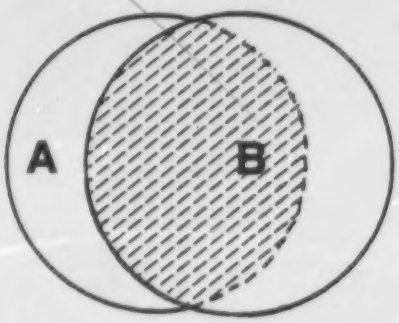
A: Mr. Chairman, I think the board should investigate the swimming pool idea.

B: (No response from anyone.)

Summary

There is no contact between board members on the subject. They ignore each other, the problem or idea or change the subject. There is no attempt to explore commonality or find areas of agreement or disagreement.

Illustration (Transparency BA 7, Overagreement)



Over Agreement

ROLE PLAY 4

Overagreement

Superintendent: I'd like us to construct a swimming pool so we could improve our PE program. We could offer swimming and diving...

Board Member: You hit the nail on the head, John. I've been saying that for years. This community needs a pool. It would be a safety program for kids...teaching them to swim and all. Besides, look at what a community asset it would be. I'll bet there are a lot of adults who would pay to use it evenings, weekends and summers, too!
Mr. Chairman, I move that we appoint a committee to begin immediately, and I'll volunteer as chairman. Now, John...

Superintendent: Oh! (Throws up his hands in disgust because he didn't get a chance to fully express his idea.)

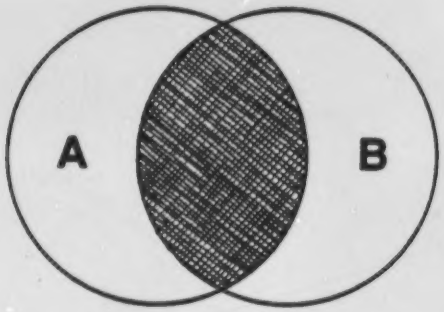
Board Member: The next thing we'll do is contact the... (oblivious to Superintendent and his feelings of being put down and bypassed).

Summary

Board Member steals the show. Little or no time or attention is given Superintendent who began initiating the whole idea or topic. No time is given to an exchange of ideas to determine commonality or differences. Board Member runs away with it converting the subject to his/her own biases and disregards the originator completely.

Illustration (Transparency BA 7, Active Listening

ACTIVE LISTENING:



Summary

Active listening means the listener has a definite responsibility. The listener actively tries to grasp the facts and the feeling in what is said, and tries, by listening, to help the speaker communicate. Active listening means we:

- Hear the person out—by not interrupting
- Listen to tone and feeling as well as words
- Listen to the intention of the communication
- Try to see the world from the other person's frame of reference
- Attempt to understand the other person's point of view—remembering that understanding does not mean agreeing

WHY IS COMMUNICATION SO DIFFICULT?

- We describe and see things in terms of our own experience. Every interpretation is different because it is subjective.
- A stimulus affects no two people the same way. Our perceptions do not come from what we see. They come from within us. We do not see with the physical eye as much as we see with the I (the ego).
- A stimulus does not affect each of us in the same way at different times. Once we change, we never see things the same way again.
- We learn to see things as we do. We are not born observers; we learn to see. We see with what we have learned: our values, beliefs, attitudes, knowledge and feelings.
- We see things not as they are, but as we are. We bring our own meanings to the things that we see. We cannot escape the tendency to color our observations with that which is unique in ourselves. We see things in terms of our age, position, sex, physical condition and state of mind.
- We see things largely as we have seen them before. We tend to see things the way we are used to seeing them.
- We tend to find that for which we are looking.
- We tend to complete in our mind those things which are incomplete in reality.
- We tend to simplify things we do not understand.
- The heart of communication is not words but understanding, and understanding is a joint process. It takes two to complete it. Effective communication moves freely in both directions. It implies not only to be understood, but to understand.
- Some words have different meanings.
- An inadequate feedback system interferes with communication.
- Differences in age between persons may cause miscommunication.

Adapted from the Hillsdale College Leadership Letters, Hillsdale College, Hillsdale, Michigan.

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Poor communication is often the result of many factors. The following list contains some of the most commonly acknowledged barriers to communication.

- Sender has poor knowledge of subject or is inadequately prepared.
- Sender does not believe in message or policy behind it.
- Receiver has poor knowledge of subject or is inadequately prepared.
- Receiver is not interested in subject.
- Sender or receiver is temporarily preoccupied.
- People unintentionally fail to say what they mean.
- Sender and receiver have very different vocabularies.
- There are cultural differences between communicators.
- Professional differences exist between communicators.
- Communicators have different assumptions.
- There are status differences (as leader-member) between communicators.
- One of the communicators has negative or hostile reactions to the other.
- One of the communicators tends to be a "yes man" to the other.
- One or both parties is unintentionally miscommunicating.
- Outside interference or distractions have occurred.
- Pressure of time does not allow effective communication to occur.
- Words seem to be inadequate to express difficult concepts, relationships or situations.

From Training Volunteer Leaders: A Handbook to Train Volunteers and Other Leaders of Program Groups. YMCA: New York, 1974.

REFLECTION SHEET

Thoughts, ideas and/or suggestions our board might consider are:

1.

2.

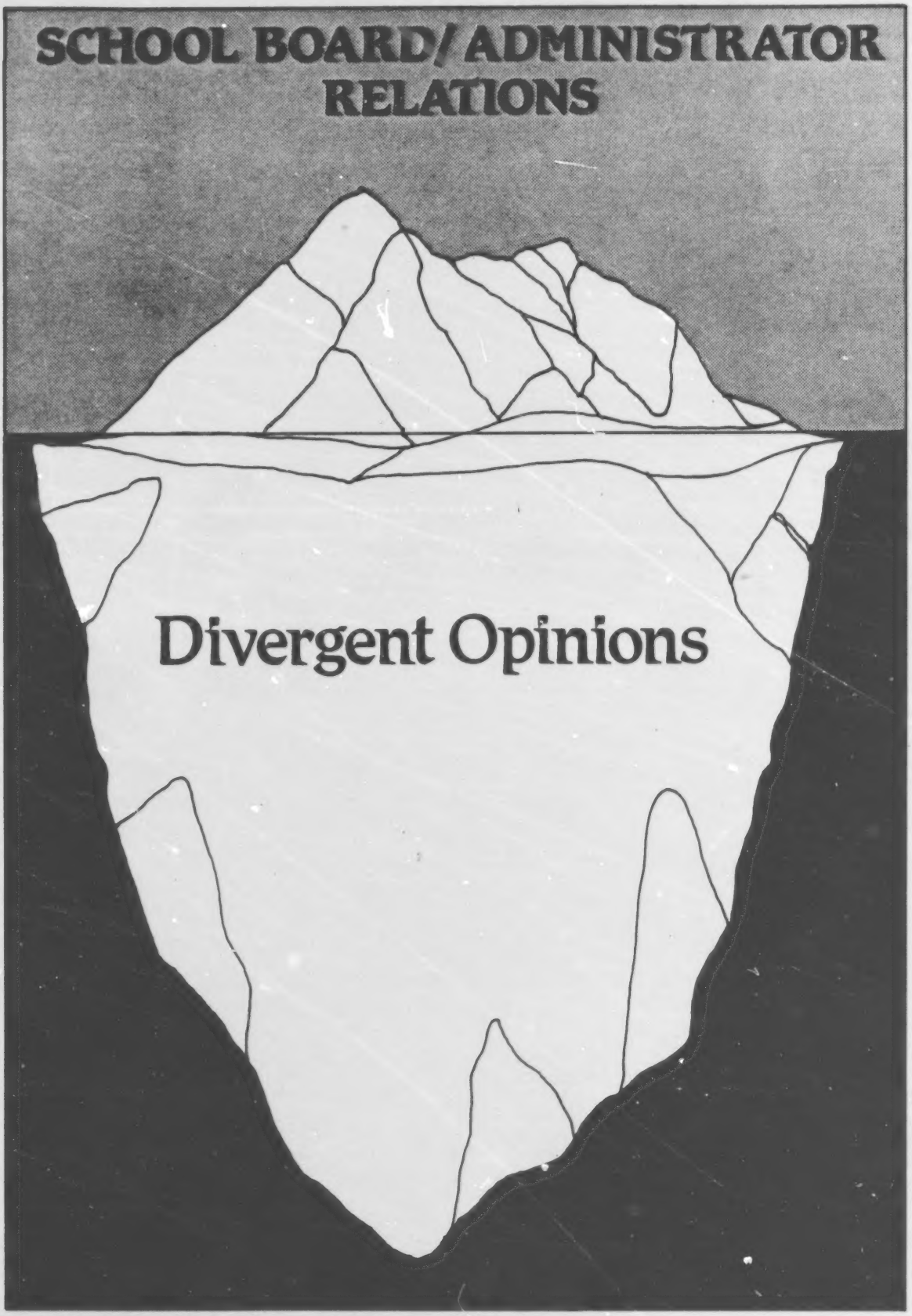
3.

4.

5.

6.

7.


SCHOOL BOARD/ ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONS
Divergent Opinions

These materials have been produced as part of "Keys to School Boardsmanship," a project to develop new materials in boardsmanship education for local school board members. It is a joint effort among:

- The Association of Alaska School Boards
- The Idaho School Boards Association
- The Montana School Boards Association
- The Oregon School Boards Association
- The Washington State School Directors' Association
- The National School Boards Association
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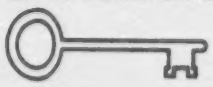
KEYS TO SCHOOL BOARDSMANSHIP



Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

Board-Staff Relationships

DIVERGENT OPINIONS

T/F

___ 1. Differing opinions on issues is a sign of a healthy school system.
___ 2. People directly affected by board decisions should have the opportunity to influence those decisions.
___ 3. A major board responsibility is to solicit and interpret community and staff opinion on the direction of the school system.
___ 4. Special interest groups help the board in deliberations about issues and problems.
___ 5. Boards which consistently split decisions are generally better understood in the community.
___ 6. If the board does not go along with the superintendent's recommendation there will be trouble.
___ 7. "Compromise" is another word for "defeat."

Opinions may differ, but the facts speak for themselves

WHY ARE THERE DIFFERENCES IN OPINION?

- Differences in the way of seeing things – from the board and/or community point of view, from the professional educator point of view, from the student point of view
- Value differences – from differing philosophical, moral or religious viewpoints or different attitudes due to upbringing, cultural background and experiences
- Role pressure and expectations – from lack of clarity and agreement about job and role descriptions; conflict in trying to inhabit more than one role
- Different goals – from unclear school, board and/or district goals, people often make their own interpretations

DOESN'T DISAGREEMENT STIMULATE GREATER INTEREST AND DEEPER STUDY OF AN ISSUE?

Positive results can result from an airing of different points of view. If such disagreements lead to personal attack and attempts to embarrass, the results can be negative for all concerned.

ISN'T THE BOARD'S DUTY TO ACHIEVE BOARD GOALS – RATHER THAN THOSE OF THE STAFF?

The objective is always to work toward a commonly desired goal. This, of course, is an ideal which is not always possible. On the other hand, human society has survived and progressed through a process of modifying and adjusting in an effort to reach general consensus.

ISN'T "COMPROMISE" A DEFEATIST APPROACH?

No. Often we may not be entirely "right" or "wrong." The challenging by management and staff of each other's position encourages greater understanding and improvement of proposals.

ISN'T THE TREND TOWARD GREATER STAFF INVOLVEMENT AN ATTEMPT BY EMPLOYEES TO BE PART OF THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS?

Undoubtedly. The same can be said of other citizen groups and individuals who express divergent views regarding actions the board may take. The distinction should be made, however, between contributing to the decision making process and *making* the decision. The latter is and must remain the board's prerogative. But a decision should not be made in a vacuum.

ARE DIFFERING OPINIONS A SIGN OF BOARD HEALTH AND VITALITY?

One of the great dangers of board decision making is that of "group think," where board members make major decisions without critically examining the facts and considering alternatives. During such deliberations, differences of opinion are to be expected; in fact, taken as a sign of a healthy decision making process. The board, of course, makes the final decision. Where unanimity exists from the beginning, sometimes all the information has not been available.

HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH DIFFERING OPINIONS?

Within the board:

- Make certain that all opinions are heard and understood. (Can you accurately state another person's opinion?)
- Determine what is common and what is different about points of view that are held. (Writing these on a blackboard sometimes clarifies them and reduces emotional attachments.)
- Try to locate areas where compromise is most likely, especially if a board decision is needed on the issue. (If a person suggests points that he/she is willing to discuss and negotiate, a solution is more easily found.)

From the community:

- Listen carefully to them. Try to restate them in your own words to test your understanding and accuracy.
- Ask them for their recommendations, ideas or proposed solutions. Why is it a concern? Who is affected? What do they want the board to do?
- If more than one group or person is involved in the same issue, ask if they would be willing to meet with a board member at a designated time to explore the issue and alternative solutions.

Between board and staff:

- To what extent are the differences based on accurate information?
- Is the issue a personality issue? If so, is a private session advisable between the two parties?
- Do the differences affect the work of the board? If so, how and why?
- Identify additional information that is needed.
- Find time to become better acquainted.
- Can these differences become written statements which will clarify them and take away much of the emotional feelings attached to them?
- Would a "third party" help make the difference more clearly understood? If so, ask a mutually-agreed-upon person to assist.

SUMMARY

Differences of opinion are normal and healthy indications of an active school board. They occur in boards because we see the same things differently, have values that differ, see issues from various role perspectives and have goals of different degrees of importance. Board-staff relationships emerge out of these divergent opinions – both positively and negatively.

WAYS WE RESPOND TO DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Differing opinions sometimes cause disagreements. Disagreements at times cause us to behave in ways that are harmful to others and especially to ourselves. These disruptive behaviors occur when we begin to experience "bad feelings" in our body. For some of us it is in the pit of our stomach. For others, we get a headache or neckache. Still others feel a tightness in the shoulders or chest. You know where your "bad feelings" reside. They are signals to our mind for us to respond to the person exhibiting disruptive behavior in one of the following ways:

1. Saving Them or Gunny-Sacking--When I feel resentment, anger or frustration, I say nothing. I save it! I collect the "bad feelings" and they begin building up inside me. I stuff my feelings into my "gunny sack." I may do this because I don't want to let the other person know the discomfort such actions are causing me, or I may be fearful of what might happen if I let them out.

   What are the consequences? Storing or gunny-sacking anger, frustration, resentment or other "bad feelings" causes our body ill effects. We can only take so much before an ulcer, tick or some other illness develops. Another unfortunate thing often happens. After we have saved and stored so long, we dump our whole sack on our family or friends who have had nothing to do with the situation that caused our "bad feelings." When we "dump" our full sack because we have saved it so long, we usually heave it out. The person receiving it feels this as an attack. The behavior we display when we save or gunny sack our feelings is usually withdrawal, indifference or giving up.

2. Cushioning Them--If I decide to share my "bad feelings," I do so on a limited basis. I try to soften the message. I do not say what I feel strongly enough to have much effect upon others. I tell myself that I cushion in order to protect the others' feelings; in reality, I do it to protect myself. I am afraid that confronting the other in a straight way will cause me pain.

   There are several ways we use this response. We may use praise: "I know you are usually on time. I don't know what has happened lately." Or we may begin by reassuring: "I don't want to embarrass you..." Or begin with agreement: "I know we are all under strain right now..." Or we may use a shotgun approach, shooting in all directions hoping to hit the guilty party with the message: "There are some people in our meeting that act like they don't care what we do." Such a vague response is easily misunderstood because it hits the innocent and the guilty alike. Those for whom the message was intended rarely realize that you are talking to them. However, others who are innocent often feel "put down" for no reason.

3. Attacking--Still another way of reacting to disruptive behavior is to attack. We do this by critically judging the other person's behavior. There are two things we may do. First, we put a "label" on the person by saying "You are stupid," "You are rude." The second is to challenge a person's motive or intent: "You don't care about what we are trying to do," "You don't even care about this board." Note how most attacks begin with the word "you"!

   These attacks usually result in the other person withdrawing and being lost as a productive board member. Another consequence is that the other person may become defensive or hostile and retaliate by attacking. When this happens, there are negative results for the board. By questioning a person's motives or giving a value to his/her actions, we are being judgmental and often will cause the person to react negatively toward our group and its work.

A POSITIVE RESPONSE TO DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

There is a positive and more creative way of responding and confronting behavior that disturbs or is offensive to us. The goal of our response is not to punish the other person for the behavior but rather to enhance the possibility of changing or modifying his/her behavior. In order for this to happen, I may need to change the way I act or respond. There are three important parts to remember as I plan my response:

1. Claim responsibility for my own feelings.

   Instead of blaming others, my internal response is one of ill-at-ease. I feel angry, hurt, irritated or frustrated. Send an "I" message instead of a "You" message, e.g., "I am angry," rather than "You make me angry." By accepting responsibility for my own feelings, I am able to control myself.

2. Accurately describe how the behavior of the other person affects me.

   Rather than labeling or calling another person's motives into question, attempt to describe accurately how his/her behavior is upsetting to you. If this is done clearly, it enables the other person to see how he/she may work out more acceptable behavior. When I can see what I am doing, I am more easily persuaded to want to give the person reasons why the behavior is unacceptable or inappropriate. Make it clear why you feel it is troublesome.

3. Explain how the behavior is hurting the group.

   This explanation is more than being something "I just don't like." It should be tangible like time, money or energy. If this is clearly done, the other person will be able to see how the behavior is damaging the group. To do this becomes a check on me to determine why I feel the group is being hurt by such behavior.

Learning to respond in new ways takes time and practice. A simple three-step process is a helpful guide to use as you practice.

1. When you (describe the behavior)...
2. I feel (describe your feelings)...
3. Because (state the cost to the group)...

Example: "When you fail to bring the minutes of the last board meeting, I become frustrated because we may overlook some important details without a record of our past business transactions."

Using this more creative way of responding and confronting behavior that disturbs or upsets us makes it possible for people to understand how their behavior is affecting others. They won't feel "put down" and it leaves them free to look at the possibility of changing or modifying their behavior.

AN EXERCISE: FOUR SITUATIONS

Situation 1

The room is hot and stuffy. It has been a long board meeting. You and the other members are feeling tired. Mr. Andrews, board chairman, announces the remaining agenda item--paying the bills! Jack Jones immediately moves its acceptance (as he does about 90 percent of the time on any motion), and the motion is seconded. The chairman calls for the vote and everyone, except you, votes "yes"--you say nothing. There was an item among the bills that you wanted to question, but you didn't get a chance. How might you respond to this situation?

My response

When you (describe the behavior)_____

_____

I feel (describe your feelings)_____

_____

Because (state the cost to the group)_____

_____

Situation 2

Under new business, your superintendent recommends that the district's field trip policy be amended to exclude the use of parents' cars for transportation. The board chairman agrees saying that a recent incident could have been avoided if such a policy had existed. Upon questioning the chairman, you learn about the incident and the minor damages involved. It comes as a surprise to you, and you feel somewhat hurt when you realize that the superintendent explained this situation to the board chairman but not to the other board members. What might be your response to this episode?

My response

When you_____

_____

I feel_____

_____

Because _____

_____

Situation 3

A few days ago the news media released the information that population decline in an older and prestigious neighborhood may force the school board to close the elementary school in the area. The board recently discussed this prospect only briefly during an executive session. No actions, recommendations or study of this possibility have been taken by the administration. At your board meeting, the leading citizen from this neighborhood appears. She is very irate at this suggestion and launches an attack on the board for even considering such an unwarranted action. The chairman unsuccessfully tries to reassure her that no action has been agreed upon and that her conclusion of closing the school is premature. The lady demands that the board take action tonight against closure. The board chairman looks helplessly at you. How might you respond to this influential citizen?

My response

When you_____

_____

I feel_____

_____

Because _____

_____

Situation 4

Last night at the board meeting, the superintendent recommended that the board appoint a citizen task force to study the adequacy of the district's physical facilities. You suggested that the board ought to develop a policy on the appointment of any task force or committee. You made the point that such a policy would help the board be clear about what the task force was to accomplish, what their responsibilities were, the nature of any constraints that exist and the time schedule. Other board members and the superintendent liked your ideas and spent time discussing and sharing their views. The result was a decision to have a draft policy ready for review at the next board meeting!

How do you feel when the board shares your concerns, listens to your ideas and adopts them?

My response

When you_____

_____

I feel_____

_____

Because_____

_____

BOARD-ADMINISTRATOR DISAGREEMENTS

Causes and Solutions

Disagreements between school board members and their administrators can become a serious problem if they are not recognized early, and if steps are not taken to alleviate them. Board/administrator conflict may result in staff and public confusion about the direction of the school system, bitter division within the board over recommendations made by the administrator and a loss of quality in the education program.

What Causes Board/Administrator Disagreement?

Even a normal and healthy working relationship between the school board and its administrator involves certain dynamic tensions. There are, for example, differences in background between the citizen board member and the professional educator. Board members and professionals speak different languages. The line between the policy role of the board and the administrative role of the administrator is often unclear.

Boards and administrators with a good working relationship have learned to handle this natural tension and the minor misunderstanding and conflict it causes. More serious conflict can result from the actions and attitudes of both administrators and board members.

The administrator can contribute to disagreement with the board in the following areas:

1. Communications
   - o Not keeping the board informed
   - o Not being well informed or prepared during board meetings
   - o Making public statements before informing the board
   - o Being inaccessible to the public
   - o Surprising the board with new information
2. Leadership
   - o Being too political
   - o Employing poor management practices
   - o Failing to follow board direction
   - o Unwillingness to make unpopular recommendations
   - o Failure to present alternatives in an objective way

3. Trust and Confidence

- o Treating board members unequally
- o Failing to recognize board members
- o Having a "hidden agenda"
- o Failing to show loyalty and support to the board
- o Failing to be open with the board

Board members can contribute to disagreements with the administrator in the following areas:

1. Communications

- o Surprising administrator with new information at board meetings
- o Failing to be open with the administrator
- o Lacking procedure for handling complaints and grievances

2. Leadership

- o Encroaching in administrative areas
- o Acting as individuals in board matters
- o Lacking willingness to approve personnel recommendations
- o Lacking of officers' skill in leading meetings
- o Failing to set goals

3. Trust and Confidence

- o Failing to keep executive session deliberations confidential
- o Harboring hidden agendas
- o Failing to be prepared for meetings and decisions
- o Attacking the administrator
- o Finding ways to circumvent administrator in communicating with staff
- o Lacking willingness to act on tough issues

What Can Be Done to Resolve and Manage Board/Administrator Disagreement?

Identification and acknowledgement of specific problems in the board/administrator working relationship is the first step in improving it. If this can be done before disagreements become serious, the improvement can be made in a constructive way.

Regular assessment and taking stock of the working relationship can result in early identification of areas for improvement.

The superintendent can alleviate disagreements with the board by:

- Treating all board members as equals, without showing favoritism
- Providing board members with accurate and timely information, and keeping them informed
- Showing trust in the board's judgment
- Being open and honest with the board
- Presenting alternatives objectively

Board members can reduce disagreements with the administrator by:

- Coming to an understanding and agreement about policy/administrative areas
- Doing their homework
- Communicating openly with the administrator, including expectations for performance
- Showing trust in the superintendent

Boards and their administrators have found that worksessions in a retreat setting provide a good opportunity for a thorough review and candid discussion of their working relationships. Improvement begins with setting new goals and establishing new agreements about the relationship.

REFLECTION SHEET

Thoughts, ideas and/or suggestions our board might consider are:

1.

2.

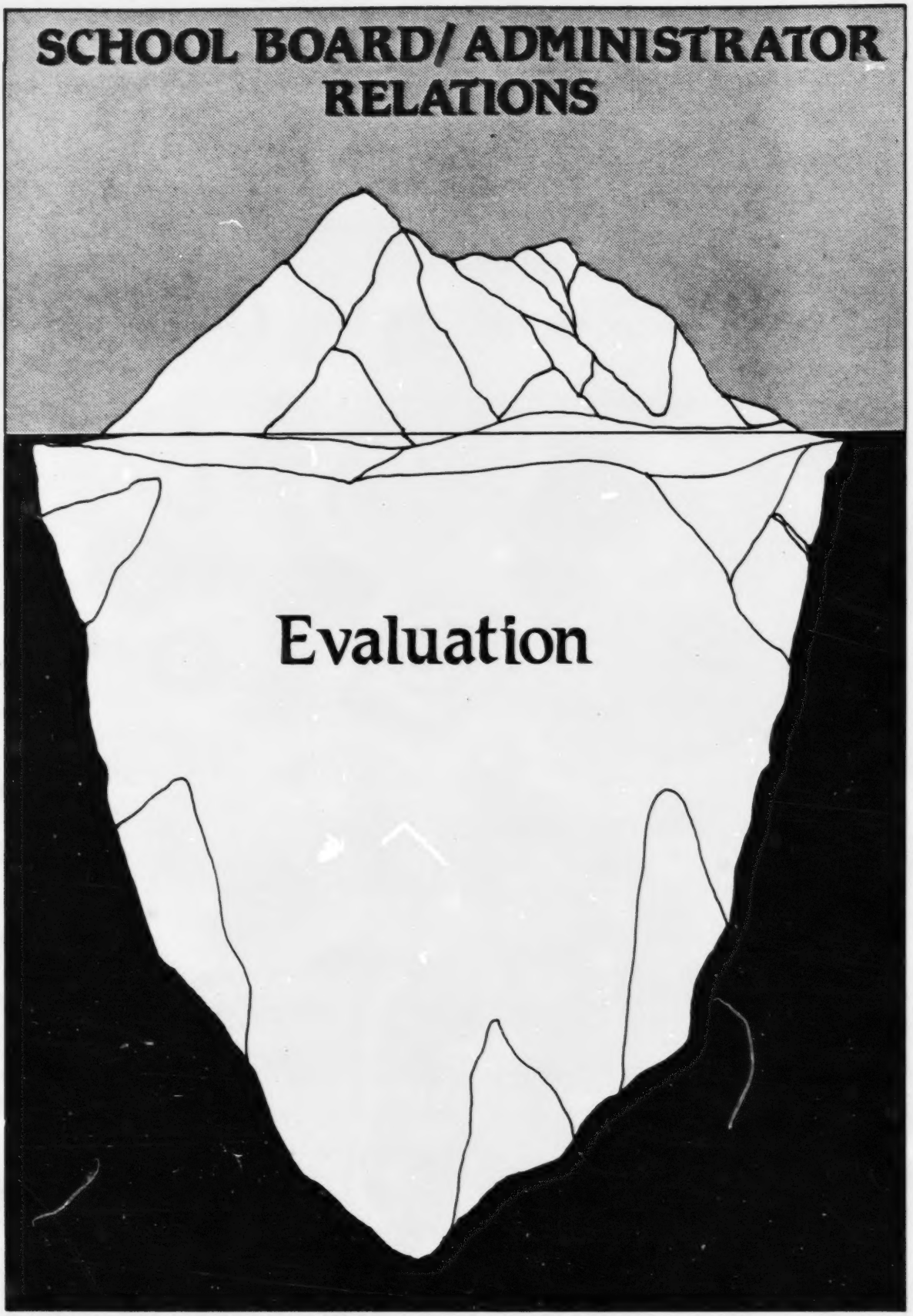
3.

4.

5.

6.

7.


SCHOOL BOARD/ ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONS
Evaluation

These materials have been produced as part of "Keys to School Boardsmanship," a project to develop new materials in boardsmanship education for local school board members. It is a joint effort among:

- The Association of Alaska School Boards
- The Idaho School Boards Association
- The Montana School Boards Association
- The Oregon School Boards Association
- The Washington State School Directors' Association
- The National School Boards Association
- The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

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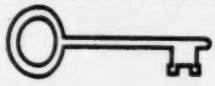
KEYS TO SCHOOL BOARDSMANSHIP



Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

EVALUATION CRITERIA

List at least three criteria that are important when evaluating the superintendent.

1.

2.

3.

Board-Staff Relationships EVALUATION

A True-False Quiz

T/F

___ 1. Evaluation is the responsibility of the superintendent and staff.
___ 2. Board members are "meddling" in administration if they expect to evaluate the school program.
___ 3. A sign of a healthy school board is one that takes time every now and then to examine how well it is operating as a group.
___ 4. Time spent by the school board in developing staff goals and objectives makes the job of evaluating much easier.
___ 5. The main reason to evaluate the superintendent is to obey the law.
___ 6. When the school board evaluates the superintendent it can expect to hire a new one.
___ 7. One of the best times to discuss evaluation procedures with a superintendent is during the hiring process.

WHAT IS EVALUATION?

It is the process of gathering information that may help improve future performance of school personnel, programs and operations.

WHY DOES AN EFFECTIVE SCHOOL BOARD EVALUATE?

To determine the degree to which the established goals of the school board are being or have been met

HOW DOES EVALUATION FIT INTO THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL BOARD?

Effective boards develop written policies that provide guidelines for the evaluation of staff, school programs, district operations and for the board itself. These plans include short range progress reports on the goals that a district establishes as well as long term final assessments. Both are very useful for helping boards and staff in decision making.

HOW DO SOME SCHOOL BOARDS USE EVALUATION PROCEDURES?

An effective school board involves itself in annual and long range goal setting for the staff, school programs and for itself as a board. Doing this, the effective board can use information that is obtained while activities (program activities) are in progress to determine whether or not modifications in the goals or the activity or both are needed. In addition, the board has information at the end which tells it if the intended goals were met, and if not, why not.

ISN'T EVALUATION AN "ENDING" TYPE ACTIVITY?

Yes, one type of evaluation helps boards learn the worth of an activity after it has concluded. Another type of evaluation, e.g., a student's grade at the end of a semester, is used to feed back information about an activity or goal *while* it is in process. Information obtained in this manner enables modifications or changes to be made *during* an activity – often at frequent intervals, e.g., a student's report card at nine weeks or midterm.

HOW DOES THE BOARD KNOW IF GOALS ARE BEING ATTAINED?

The board will not know unless goals have been established for the staff, program or for itself as a board. Goal setting is essential if effective evaluation procedures are to be used.

ISN'T EVALUATION A MANAGEMENT FUNCTION?

Yes, it is! The effective board develops district policies on evaluation, including procedures for evaluating the superintendent, which it also administers. This is a management function and another example of how the role of school boards is changing. The traditional separation between the policy-making role by the board and administrative role by staff is gradually being modified.

WHAT ARE THE BOARD EVALUATION RESPONSIBILITIES?

In general the school board has three evaluation responsibilities, to evaluate:

- Staff (superintendent)
- School programs and operations
- Itself

The emphasis in this Fact Sheet is on school board evaluation of the superintendent.

IS SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION NEW?

Evaluating superintendents is not new! Boards have been doing this since the first one was employed. What is new is a more formalized way; in some cases laws outline how it should be done and what factors should be examined.

REASONS WHY SCHOOL BOARDS EVALUATE SUPERINTENDENTS INCLUDE:

- To determine whether or not the school system is achieving stated educational goals
- To judge the work of its executive officer – the superintendent.
- To obtain information as to the effectiveness of programs, policies and school personnel
- To aid in deciding whether programs and personnel are accountable in terms of dollars spent
- To assist boards in reviewing, revising and updating existing policies
- To provide an opportunity to give encouragement and commendation for work well done
- To provide an opportunity for self-appraisal of superintendent's own skills.
- To replace opinion with facts

WHAT OPTIONS EXIST FOR EVALUATION OF SUPERINTENDENTS?

- Use suggested plan by your state if there is one (request a copy).
- State school board and/or superintendent associations often have guidelines (checklists) prepared for use (request a copy).
- Management by Objectives (MBO) is gaining popularity and usually structures procedures as follows:
  Statement of objectives. Expected results within a time period
  Standards of performance. Activities or behaviors expected
  Measurements to be used. Describes how assessments are to be made
  Results. Comparison of results with original intentions
  Performance rating. Appraisal of overall performance
- Informal procedures– usually verbal at a regular board meeting. A written report may or may not be made.
- Work directly with your superintendent to decide on a set of goals and objectives for the year that you both agree should be used to compare performance against. This option allows the board to identify the specific goals/objectives it wishes the superintendent to achieve during a period of time. It does demand that the board knows what it expects of the superintendent and has agreed on what it is!

WHAT AREAS ARE COVERED IN SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATIONS?

The board has the responsibility for evaluating the work of the superintendent. Ideally it is a regular, planned, objective procedure. The superintendent has a right to know how the board views his or her work and the board has the responsibility to share its views with the superintendent. Though many options exist to organize the evaluation, four basic questions are suggested:

- How has the superintendent strengthened and improved the program of instruction? (Curriculum development)

- How well has the superintendent spent the public dollar? (Financial management)
- How skillfully has the superintendent recruited competent staff (teachers, supervisors, etc.), assigned them appropriate tasks and retained the best qualified? (Personnel management)
- How much support for the schools has the superintendent earned from the community? (Public and press relationships, bond passage, community-group involvement, etc.)

HOW DO WE DO IT?

Again, there are a large variety of practices from which to choose. The one to use is one that both board and superintendent agree would be fair and reasonable. The following are among the choices a board has:

- Follow procedures prescribed by law or state regulations (if any).
- Use prepared forms available through state school board/superintendent associations or state department of education.
- Pick and choose items from any or all of the above and assemble your own form.

Note: Regardless of which choice or combination is chosen it is crucial that both board and superintendent agree on the method, form and timing of the evaluation.

- When hiring a new superintendent jointly develop a process of evaluation that will be used at least annually. Include those items that deal with the superintendent in a *personal way*, i.e., style of operation, interaction with the board, staff and community, how the superintendent performs his/her job. A second part should include the total *school district operation*, i.e., assessing annual goals and priorities, problems, curriculum matters, etc. The first part forms a written summary for the superintendent's permanent file. The second could be summarized in outline form and used as the basis for an annual report to the community.
- Ideally, feedback opportunities would be scheduled during the year to help the board learn of progress being made toward goals that had been established.

EVALUATION TIPS

- Become familiar with different approaches for evaluating the superintendent; i.e., ask other board members, ask school board association staff, etc.
- Make certain that the subject of evaluating the superintendent has been discussed and agreed upon by the board with the superintendent.
- Develop clearly worded policies, rules or regulations that state your expectations as a board of the superintendent.
- When hiring a new superintendent, specify in the contract what the evaluation procedures are.
- Well stated district goals and objectives greatly assist the superintendent in carrying out board expectations.
- Regular, objective procedures for evaluating the superintendent assist the board in keeping one who is doing a good job and clearly identify areas of emphasis when expectations are not being met.
- Since board-staff functions are so closely associated with each other, the board would profit by evaluating its own operation regularly.

JOINT POSITION STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION AND THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS ON GOAL SETTING AND SELF-EVALUATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

(Recommended by the Joint AASA/NSBA Committee - January 30, 1980)

How well does this board do its job? Do we function as effectively as we can? How can we use our individual resources to make progress in our performance? And how are we going to assess progress? These questions belong on every school board's agenda under "continuous business." They belong there because an integral part of a governing board's obligation to make policy includes identifying goals, monitoring progress toward them, and revising goals as necessary after each assessment.

To meet this obligation, every school board should adopt a written policy that states the board's belief that goal setting and evaluation are essential to exemplary school leadership. The policy also should spell out what kind of goal setting and evaluation activities the board believes will improve its own stewardship.

Here is an example of such a policy statement:

EVALUATION OF SCHOOL BOARD OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

The board believes that periodic, formal and informal evaluations of its operational procedures will improve the board's performance, exemplify the kind of constructive evaluations the board encourages for all school personnel and programs, and promote a spirit of teamwork throughout the district. Formal evaluations also provide the board with suggestions useful to the board in establishing objectives it will strive to accomplish.

At least once annually, board members will evaluate their own performance--and that of the board as a whole.

All of this information will be used by the board each year when it establishes objectives it will strive to accomplish during the coming year. How well the board accomplishes its objectives will be a measure of its performance in any year.

The basic features of a board evaluation/goal setting program are:

1. Any evaluation should be constructive. That is, it should be a tool that assumes a group of individuals is capable of improvement if evaluation is carried out systematically with good planning, conscientious follow-through, and careful assessment of results.

2. Board members should develop the standards against which they will evaluate themselves. They should be involved in development of standards that measure, for instance, their relationship with the superintendent, how well they conduct board meetings, how the community perceives the schools, and so on.

3. A board should recognize the difference between school district goals and goals that the board sets for its own performance. Some significant areas for developing school board goals are encompassed within three of the main functions of school board members, which are to serve as:

   - o governors of the school district as part of local representative government;
   - o ambassadors of the instructional program to explain the nature of the learning program to the people of the district; and,
   - o advocates for the learners of the school district with the public generally and in the halls of other local governmental agencies and the state and federal governments.

4. A form for the evaluation/goal-setting program should be designed and it should contain places to indicate not only strengths and weaknesses, but also to write in suggestions about how to improve. These suggestions can be used to set objectives for board improvement over the coming year.

5. The board should not limit itself to those items that appear on the evaluation form. While formal evaluation forms help discussions get started, informal comments also have their value; each judgment, nevertheless, should be documented with as much supportive evidence as possible.

6. Formal evaluation should take place at least once a year and at a scheduled time and place. A specific time should be scheduled well in advance of the formal evaluation.

7. A composite picture of board strengths and weaknesses is most accurate. Therefore, each board member should complete an evaluation form independently of other board members. Then the board as a whole should meet to compare and discuss results.

8. When results have been discussed and tabulated, the board should list the objectives it will attempt to accomplish before its next evaluation session.

9. The board should devise a process for establishing goals.

10. The board should be evaluated as whole, not as individuals.

11. The board should provide itself with appropriate inservice education to ensure it meets its own objectives.

12. The board should adhere to mandates of open meeting "sunshine laws" to ensure that self-evaluation of a board conducted in executive session does not violate any law or policy.

REFLECTION SHEET

Thoughts, ideas and/or suggestions our board might consider are:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

REFLECTION SHEET

Thoughts, ideas and/or suggestions our board might consider are:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

BOARD/ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONS WORKSHOP

Evaluation Form

Your reactions to this workshop will aid your association to improve future workshops on this topic. No names please. Thank you!

1. My overall reaction to this workshop:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very Low			So-So			Very High

Comments:

_____

_____

2. What was the most helpful idea you gained from this workshop?

_____

_____

3. In this workshop I'd like more of:

_____

_____

3. In this workshop I'd suggest less:

_____

_____

5. Please rate the leader of the workshop.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very Low			So-So			Very High

5. General comments, ideas or suggestions.

_____

_____

_____

RELATED TRANSPARENCIES

A PROGRAM OF QUALITY INSTRUCTION

by:

- ASSESSING NEEDS AND TRENDS
- ESTABLISHING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
- INITIATING AND SUPPORTING PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT
- EMPLOYING INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF
- ADOPTING INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS
- EVALUATING THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

BA 1A

MANAGEMENT AND DIRECTION

by:

- EMPLOYING, DIRECTING, AND EVALUATING THE SUPERINTENDENT
- DELEGATING AUTHORITY, BUT NOT RESPONSIBILITY, FOR MANAGEMENT
- ESTABLISHING POLICIES AND MONITORING:
    - ANNUAL BUDGET
    - BOND ELECTIONS
    - FISCAL ACCOUNTING
    - TAX AND DEBT MANAGEMENT
    - PAYROLL PROCEDURES
    - PURCHASING
    - BUILDING MAINTENANCE
    - PLANT CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION
    - SURPLUS PROPERTY DISPOSAL
    - FOOD SERVICES
    - TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
    - NEGOTIATIONS, COLLECTIVE BARGAINING
    - PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

GUIDANCE THROUGH POLICY DEVELOPMENT

In areas of:

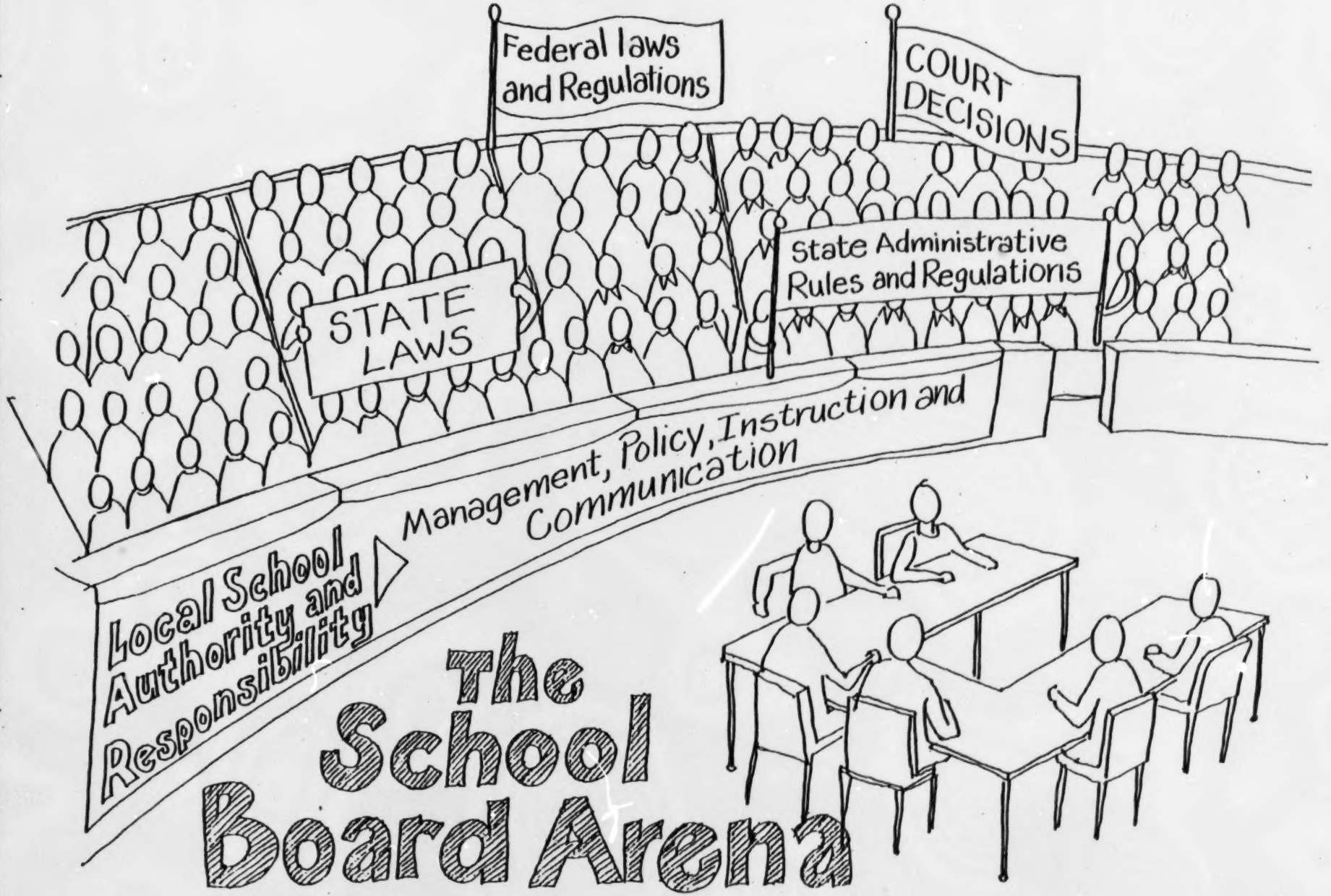
- INSTRUCTION
- PERSONNEL
- GENERAL ADMINISTRATION
- FISCAL AND BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
- PHYSICAL PLANT
- COMMUNITY RELATIONS

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN COMMUNITY AND STAFF

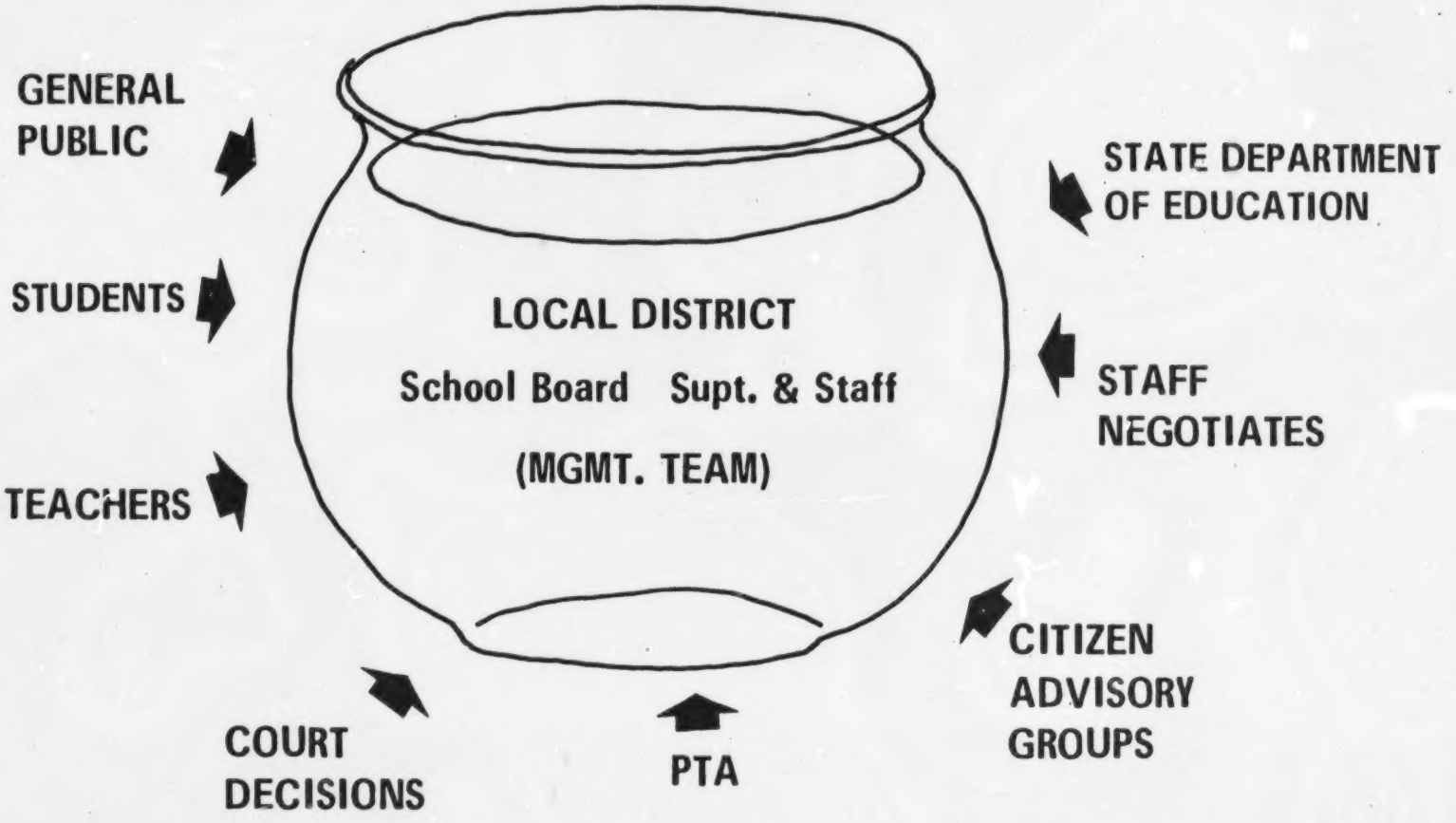
by:

- TELLING THE SCHOOL STORY TO THE PUBLIC
  - ENSURING PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF SCHOOL GOALS AND PROGRAMS
  - SECURING PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE SCHOOLS
  - FOSTERING COOPERATION WITH THE NEWS MEDIA

- PROMOTING THE PUBLIC PRESENCE IN THE SCHOOLS
  - ESTABLISHING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH STAFF
  - ENCOURAGING CITIZEN ATTENDANCE AT BOARD MEETINGS
  - ENSURING RESPONSE TO PUBLIC CONCERN AND CRITICISM
  - ENSURING THAT PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS HEAR AND UNDERSTAND PUBLIC ATTITUDES


Federal laws and Regulations
COURT DECISIONS
STATE LAWS
State Administrative Rules and Regulations
Management, Policy, Instruction and Communication
Local School Authority and Responsibility
The School Board Arena

SCHOOL BOARDS OPERATE IN A FISH BOWL!



ISSUES, RELATIONSHIPS, POLITICS

THE BOARD SETS POLICY

THE SUPERINTENDENT ADMINISTERS POLICY RULES & REGULATIONS

Goals
Objectives

School Program

BA 4

BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT RESPONSIBILITY

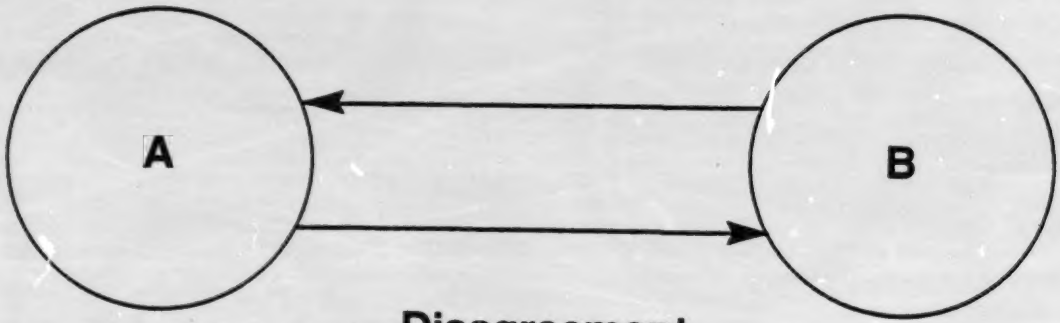
1-B
2-B
3-S
4-S
5-B
6-S
7-B
8-S
9-S
10-B
11-B
12-S
13-S
14-B
15-B
16-B
17-S
18-S
19-S
20-B
21-B
22-S
23-B
24-S
25-B
26-B
27-B
28-S
29-S
30-S
31-B
32-S
33-B
34-S
35-S
36-B

ACTIVE LISTENING

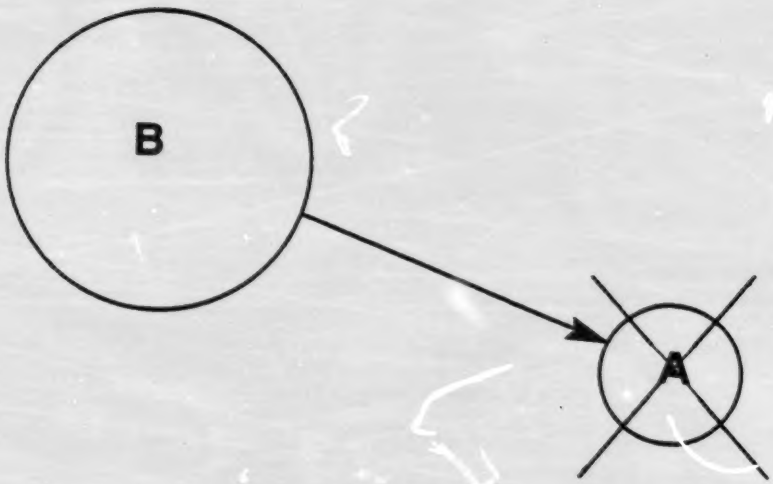
- Silence
- Acknowledgement
- Door Opener Statements
- Parroting
- Paraphrasing
- Reflective Listening

PATTERNS OF COMMUNICATION

AGGRESSIVE:



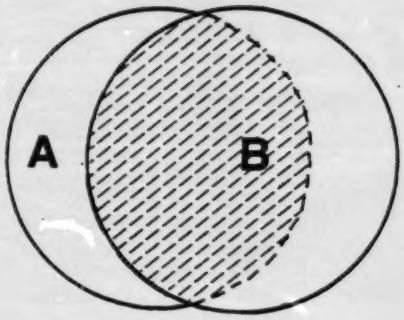
Disagreement



Invalidation

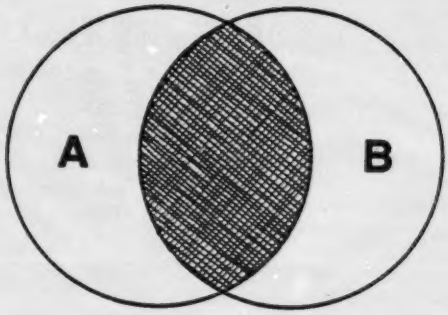
ACQUIESCENT:

Avoidance



Over Agreement

ACTIVE LISTENING:



BA 7B

RESPONDING TO DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

- Describe the behavior:
  "When you ..."
- Describe your feeling:
  "I feel ..."
- State the cost to the group:
  "Because ..."